

ARCHAEOLOGY EDUCATION IN ONTARIO: A RELATIONAL INQUIRY OF  
INDIGENOUS MUSEUMS AND ARTIFACTS

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## Abstract

Many sectors of society, such as justice, health care, and education, are moving towards a relationship of Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Ontario's secondary school History curriculum, however, especially that which concerns the deep history of Turtle Island, is still almost exclusively based on the findings of Western scientific archaeology and methods of artifact interpretation generated by colonially-trained archaeologists. Writers of this curriculum have traditionally not included Indigenous worldviews, ways of knowing, and relationships with artifacts in course content, even as professional archaeologists, historians, and curators are moving to more collaborative research frameworks with Indigenous communities. This research project investigates what *Indigenous archaeologies* entail, and how Indigenous approaches to understanding archaeological artifacts in museum contexts (re)centre, (re)member, (re)cognize, and (re)present Indigenous ways of knowing to decolonize my teaching of the history curriculum.

Since I am not an Indigenous person, the research method and paradigm of my research is a Western qualitative approach based on critical and decolonizing methodologies that is affected by and respectful of Indigenous methodologies. Specifically, I conduct fieldwork in a selection of museums organized by Indigenous archaeologists/educators to learn how Indigenous experts are using artifacts to narrate history. One goal of the fieldwork is to identify themes, concepts, and approaches that Indigenous educators have selected to represent Indigenous histories to diverse public audiences. My dissertation applies that learning to consider what it means to change how I teach the history curriculum that spans the time before colonization. Drawing on concepts of multivocality, storytelling, fencing, and Métissage, the study interprets museum galleries as research data and recommends new directions in teaching the history curriculum of the time before colonization that align with the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its *Calls to Action*.

*Keywords:* Decolonizing education, Indigenous archaeology, history curriculum

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Archaeology Education in Ontario: a Relational Inquiry of Indigenous Museums and  
Artifacts

CHAPTER ONE

Identifying the Educational Problem and Literature Review

“Education is what got us into this mess — the use of education at least in terms of residential schools — but education is the key to reconciliation” (Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Watters, 2015)).

**Introduction**

In 2015, the public education sector, along with justice, health care, and law enforcement, was given an important mandate by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to move towards relationships of Reconciliation<sup>1</sup> with Indigenous Peoples. As noted in the above quote by Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, no sector of society has greater potential to fulfil the goals of Reconciliation than public education. Within education, I would add that no subject is better situated to capitalize on this aspiration than the discipline of History, since History teachers can support students to re-examine long-standing imbalances of power and privilege across time. While History is poised to open a critical study of such imbalances, the question remains whether History curriculum in Ontario schools reflects the critical potential of the field and to what extent it responds to the goals of Reconciliation in that curriculum. These questions are

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this dissertation, I will rely on the TRC’s definition of ‘reconciliation,’ in that “...Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015b, pp. 6-7). Chelsea Vowel (Métis) (2016), like Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, asserts that “education is also the key to reconciliation” (p. 175).

particularly pressing when we take into consideration the fact that History curriculum, and arguably dominant strands of History itself remain mired in the grip of colonial narratives, presuppositions, and nomenclature. This dissertation investigates the potential and limits of History curriculum in Ontario's secondary school systems as it pertains to the study of artifacts: most notably, the field of archaeology that concerns long term, or deep history (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015, 2018a). In this project, I employ an ethical <sup>2</sup> paradigm and critical historical methodology to ask how *Indigenous archaeologies* are defined and presented in Indigenous museum contexts. I investigate how the content of museum galleries curated by Indigenous experts can allow me to (re)cognize<sup>3</sup> and challenge my understanding and teaching of History curriculum that not only decolonizes inherent narratives, but centres Indigenous ways of knowing, moving my teaching towards the goals of Reconciliation. This research is situated as a self-study in which I seek to learn about how Indigenous archaeologies are presented in museum contexts, but also seek to un-learn colonial biases that are inherent in K-12 and post-secondary education. A self-study such as this has wider implications for other settler History teachers who also seek to challenge and un-learn the colonial presuppositions in their own education and teaching practice. I have opted not to directly interview Indigenous curators who organized the museum galleries in which I learned. Drawing on various scholars (Mawhinney, 1998, Tuck and Yang, 2012, Tuck, McKenzie and McCoy,

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this dissertation, I draw on Dwayne Donald's (2012) work on *Indigenous Métissage*, in which he describes ethical relationality as "an...understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, but rather seeks to understand more deeply how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other" (p. 535). Therefore, my methodology will seek to be attentive to "the responsibilities that come with a declaration of being in relation" (p. 535).

<sup>3</sup> Following Susan Dion (2009) and Sandra Styres (2017), I use brackets to surround (re) with words like reassess, reconsider, revision, etc. to indicate both the original meaning of the word (e.g., reassess), but also to emphasize the renewed and continuing nature of the process of revision in the present and on into the future. Here, the term (re)cognize is used as both the word "recognize," (to identify), and as the word "re-cognize," to re-think, review, and reword.

2016), I suggest that relying on Indigenous experts to ‘educate’ settler researchers constitutes a *settler move to innocence*, a concept I explore further in the concluding chapter (see Chapter Six).

## **Terminology**

For the purposes of this dissertation, I see a distinction between the terms *Indigenous education* and *decolonizing education*. Rebecca Chartrand (Anishinaabe/Métis) notes that terms like *Indigenous education* or *Aboriginal education* are homogeneous terms that “can overshadow and simplify the diversity that exists among Indigenous nations in Canada” (p. 145). Nonetheless, as a term in widespread use, it is important to isolate what is meant by *Indigenous education*. Chartrand emphasizes that:

...there is a need to define what the term Aboriginal [Indigenous] education is within Canadian educational contexts, particularly for those involved with teaching and learning...Furthermore, in attempts to define *Aboriginal [Indigenous] education*, there has been little attention paid to the distinction between the pedagogy of local First Nations cultures’ and the institutionalized field of Aboriginal [Indigenous] education. (p. 144)

As a researcher who is “involved with teaching and learning,” it is incumbent on me to have an understanding of the difference between *Indigenous education* as teaching/learning and pedagogy within Anishinaabe cultures, and “the institutionalized field of Aboriginal [Indigenous] education.” Chartrand elaborates on her understanding of Anishinaabe pedagogy:

From a Western lens, Anishinaabe pedagogy in practice is not subject-centred, as it is in Western curriculum where content and subject matter receive the primary emphasis (Battiste, 2002). Rather, it is learner-centred, subjective, and relies on relational management (Absolon, 2009) (p. 152)...much of this is embedded in language, cultural practices, and in the relationship a people have created with each other and the land. (p. 153)

Chartrand employs Anishinaabe pedagogy, a “pedagogy of local First Nations cultures”

(2012, p. 144) as an example of *Aboriginal [Indigenous] education*, that is taught by, with, and for Anishinaabe peoples in specific cultural contexts. As such, Western researchers/educators, as outsiders, do not necessarily participate in *Indigenous education*.

Chartrand cites Marie Battiste to remind us that:

We must consider that the ways of teaching and learning of the Anishinaabe and Euro-western cultures are fundamentally different. In Anishinaabe culture it is difficult to separate traditions from education or spirit from learning, as these are interwoven animate features of learning (Battiste, 2002, 2004). (p. 158)

Chartrand teaches that Western researchers can and do participate in *decolonizing education*, and this is the approach I take in my research. Kathleen Absolon (Anishinaabe)

(2019) cites Battiste and others when she notes that:

Decolonizing education implies that whole systems need to be changed to combat cognitive imperialism and intellectual racism (Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2014; Mastronardi, 2009). The reality is that unless educators actively engage in their own decolonizing, reckoning and reconciling with Indigenous peoples is a far off vision. (p. 13)

Following Absolon, in my research journey I “actively engage in [my] own decolonizing” to challenge and interrupt my understanding of how to teach Indigenous history, to “combat cognitive imperialism and intellectual racism” (see Self-Location section) (2019, p. 13). Absolon succinctly iterates her understanding of decolonization, in which I locate my own challenge moving forward in my research:

Decolonization internally means a disruption of the very belief system one has come to know. Decolonization recognizes and accepts that colonization exists and continues (Adams, 1989; Aquash, 2013; Battiste, 2013). Decolonizing is a systematic rejection of colonialism through a critical encounter and gaze at the dominance and hegemonic knowledge, representation, and theory used in teaching and learning within education....(p. 17)

Learning from Absolon and others, I align my research focus as one in which I



“recognize...that colonization...continues,” and “gaze [critically] at the dominance and hegemonic knowledge, representation, and theory used in teaching and learning within education” (p. 17). Therefore, I understand my research focus to be an example of *decolonizing education* and not as *Indigenous education*.

In this dissertation, I make use of the term *Indigenous archaeologies*. There are several ways to define *Indigenous archaeology*, but I follow Anishinaabe archaeologist Sonya Atalay’s (2012), George Nicholas’ (2008a), and Stephen Silliman’s (2008) definitions. They state that “Indigenous archaeology is an expression of archaeological theory and practice in which the discipline intersects with Indigenous values, knowledge, practices, ethics, and sensibilities, and through collaborative and community-originated or –directed projects, and related critical perspectives. Indigenous archaeology seeks to...redress real and perceived inequalities in the practice of archaeology” (Nicholas, 2008a, p. 1660, Atalay, 2012, p. 39). Atalay adds that Indigenous archaeology “aims to integrate Indigenous forms of producing knowledge...to improve research practices” (p. 39). Silliman (2008) prefers the term *Indigenous archaeologies*:

...since the practices of such approaches remain fluid and situational and thankfully dodge any attempts at systemization or universal codification...doing indigenous archaeology means embracing an archaeology for, with, and by Indigenous people...that produces and engages a plethora of methods, theories, and practices...Key themes include incorporating oral histories and cultural knowledge into archaeological narratives...protecting sacred sites, remedying historical and contemporary erasures....(p. 2)

Indigenous archaeologies move beyond complete dependence on Western scientific positivism and, in the hands of archaeologists, many of which are Indigenous, are inclusive of traditional ways of knowing.

This dissertation makes use of the terms “history” and “archaeology.” These terms are

often popularly used, somewhat interchangeably, to refer to “the study of the past,” or used to mean “past events.” When assessing methods and purposes for constructing knowledge about the past and how to communicate it, a brief note on terminology is appropriate. Small “h” history will here be used to refer to past events, in a general way, including in a general sense history education and curriculum. Capital “H” History will refer to the formal academic discipline of History, such as I have done in the previous pages. The use of “H”istory usually implies a Western historiographic methodology and refers specifically to the study of periods of time for which “written records” aid in understanding the past. The “H” of History has strong colonial roots and implications, since it suggests that societies who did not make use of the written word are “prehistoric.” Often, in History curriculum, “prehistory,” in the context of North America, indicates the period before European contact (Bursey, Daechsel, Hinshelwood & Murphy, 2018). This distinction between terms is outlined by Andrew Joseph Pegoda of the University of Houston, who asserts that:

[h]istory with a little “h” is anything and everything everywhere that has ever happened. Most of history (or the past) is not recorded [at least not in ways that are acknowledged and respected by Western systems]...History with a big “H” is the study of the past, the writing of the past. It’s the history that we know and have access to. It’s a socially constructed narrative based on available evidence. (Pegoda, 2016)

While remaining cognizant and critical of the colonial implications of Pegoda’s distinction between history and History, I utilize this difference to denote when I am referring to the formal Western discipline rather than to the past in general. Historiographer Ernst Breisach, for example, epitomizes the colonial approach to History when he starts his book *Historiography* with Chapter 1, “The Emergence of Greek Historiography” (1994) in which he assesses Greco-Roman, Medieval, and Modern

historiography. However, and notably, he omits the history or historiography of any Indigenous or non-Western regions of the globe. It would seem that for Breisach, History includes only those events that have been and can be recorded and to which we have ‘access’ – both terms that are steeped in colonial frames of what, indeed, is considered ‘valuable’ to record and archive in ways we can ‘access.’

The small-vs.-capital H designation is similar for archaeology, the academic study of which is based in part on History and Anthropology. Stuart Fiedel (1990), in *Prehistory of the Americas*, suggests that “America and its inhabitants suddenly emerged from prehistory into history, that is, the period in which events have been recorded in written documents, when Christopher Columbus landed in Samana Cay...in 1492” (p. 1). Following from this, small “a” archaeology in this dissertation will refer to the use of artifacts to interpret the past in a general way, or the study of artifacts. Capital “A” Archaeology will signify the formal academic discipline, often considered a subfield of Anthropology, taught in universities usually by archaeologists trained in colonial, scientific methodologies. A further influence can be noted within the academic discipline of Archaeology: Archaeologists since the 1960s have “to a large extent turned away from the approaches of history towards those of the sciences” (Renfrew & Bahn, 1991, p. 35). One implication of the move by archaeologists to adopt positivist scientific approaches has been to reject historical interpretations that are not immediately observable in the archaeological record, an approach that both implicitly and explicitly rejects non-Western ways of knowing.

Since the 1980s, Archaeology has benefited from more diverse perspectives including post-modern and decolonizing approaches. However, it is important to note that,

as I will demonstrate in the Ontario curriculum, archaeology in education relies predominantly on positivist, scientific methodology that upholds the colonial distinction between small and capital [h][H]istory and [a][A]rchaeology. In identifying these binary terms, I wish to make a distinction between supporting this bias and identifying it for study and criticism as it has been used, and is still used, in Ontario's educational system. My dissertation mobilizes this distinction to the latter purpose to challenge the blatantly colonial inequalities propagated through it in associated terms as "prehistoric" and "historic" that remains the underlying paradigm on which Ontario's history curriculum has been based. The historical knowledge about deep history in Ontario's curriculum is obtained almost entirely from the work of professional, colonially-trained archaeologists. Throughout this dissertation, I use the term "colonially-trained archaeologists" to refer to the increasingly diverse group of university-trained archaeologists with degrees in Anthropology and Archaeology, who often, but not always, teach at universities or work for governmental or private organizations, and who write the majority of books and articles documenting Ontario's long-term history. I use the term "colonially-trained archaeologists" with hesitation, fully aware that a growing body of Indigenous peoples are becoming professional archaeologists, blurring the formerly well-defined boundaries between Western-trained archaeologists and Indigenous peoples, who were historically relegated to the position of being the objects of study, rather than the researchers themselves. However, I suggest that the use of the term "colonially-trained" or "colonial" archaeologists in contraposition to Indigenous knowledge-keepers and Elders is warranted because a) Indigenous or not, professional archaeologists are trained in Western positivistic science as it is applied to the study of the past using material remains.

This approach is not irreconcilable to, but is inherently different from, Indigenous ways of knowing. B) It is the Western, positivistic scientific approach to archaeology and the study of deep history that most often makes its way into the secondary school curriculum, since teachers and educators who write textbooks and other curriculum resources most commonly draw on the work of Western-trained archaeologists to formulate curriculum for instruction to the broad public. Therefore, I also suggest that the historical period before European contact, which consists largely of unwritten traces, occupies a disproportionately marginal status in the Ontario history curriculum. Despite this disparity in official curriculum, it is ironic that the time before European contact in fact constitutes the majority of the time period of human history on Turtle Island/North America. In my dissertation, I investigate how Indigenous scholars centre Indigenous narratives through archaeological objects within museum contexts.

I use the term “deep history” to refer to the long-term presence and histories since time immemorial, of Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island. I perceive this definition to be inclusive of the many ways of knowing through which people can access and interpret those histories aside from the confines of written texts. This is in contraposition to the terms “prehistoric” and “pre-contact.” Ann B. Stahl (2012) notes that “...the pre/history boundary provided historians with a place to begin” but “diverted attention from interconnections among societies perceived as “in” or “outside” history” (p. 158). The term “pre-contact” in reference to the time before colonization similarly centres the moment of contact as its defining feature, while the term “deep history” instead centres Indigenous histories. Silliman (2012) suggests that the term “deep history” “...serves a political goal of further situating people in their landscapes and respecting...their

ancestral connections” (p. 118).

### Central Research Questions

A central research question of this dissertation is: What culturally significant objects<sup>4</sup> do Indigenous museum educators share with the public in museums to teach deep history, and in what ways do these representations address, bear witness to, and/or disrupt the troubling colonial narratives on which both education and museums are predominantly based? In addition to the central research question, related questions that inform this research are:

- 1) How can curatorial practices within Indigenous museums help us understand gaps in current deep history curriculum that might be addressed by teachers?
- 2) How can exhibits curated by Indigenous historians and archaeologists support teachers in the work of decolonizing history curriculum in Ontario schools? How, and in what ways, are museums working with Elders and Knowledge-Keepers to access previously unrecognized knowledge and history?
- 3) In what ways are the names of artifacts, time periods, significant cultural landscapes and settlement patterns, i.e., the archaeological *nomenclature*, significant in reinforcing colonial notions of history in curriculum? And how are Indigenous people disrupting those?

Driving these queries is an overarching interest in how teachers may best incorporate the

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<sup>4</sup> By the term ‘artifact,’ I make no assumptions that Indigenous museum curators/archaeologists value or centre the same kinds of artifacts that western curators/archaeologists trained in positivist-scientific methodologies do. Here, ‘artifact’ might mean any object positioned in a museum gallery by Indigenous curators, not necessarily those excavated from archaeological sites in extractive processes. Throughout this dissertation, I often substitute the term “culturally significant object” for “artifact.” This follows Younging (2018) who suggests that the term “artifact” “...risks stripping the materials of their essential connection to specific Indigenous Peoples and their forms of expression....it can be interpreted to mean that ancient Indigenous artworks...are remnants of the past and disassociated from the contemporary members of an Indigenous People” (p. 53).

input of Indigenous archaeologists, museum educators, and archivists to (re)cognize<sup>5</sup> the ways of knowing in which archaeological materials are interpreted and used as sites of learning, appropriate for diverse publics.<sup>6</sup> It has been my experience as a secondary History and Archaeology teacher that the answers that these research questions might provide have been missing components in the History curriculum, highlighting the colonial power structures still at work in this facet of public education.

To investigate my central research question, I visited four museums curated by Indigenous experts. Researching Indigenous perspectives on History education in institutions like museums may seem problematic, given that museums have historically been powerful colonizing forces that have appropriated Indigenous pasts for settler profit (Atalay, 2008, p. 597, Caro, 2008, p. 432, Carpio, 2008, p. 291, Cobb, 2005, p. 486, DeLugan, 2008, p. 385, Lonetree, 2008, p. 305, Nakamura, 2014, p. 145, West and Cobb, 2005, p. 519, Willinsky, 1998, p. 57). However, many Indigenous experts have noted a significant improvement in the ways that some museums have been working with Indigenous communities to decolonize exhibits and galleries (Atalay, 2008a, p. 597, DeLugan, 2008, p. 385, Lonetree, 2008, p. 305, Phillips, 2008, p. 406, West and Cobb, 2005, p. 520). Ruth Phillips (2008), for example, alludes to the “epochal changes in the power relations between Indigenous peoples and...museums during the last two decades

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<sup>5</sup> Here, the term (re)cognize is used as both the word “recognize,” (to identify), and as the word “re-cognize,” to re-think, review, and reword.

<sup>6</sup> Throughout this dissertation, I use the term “diverse publics.” This is in reference to largely non-Indigenous audiences in public settings like museums and schools. In Indigenous-curated museums, educators arrange and present cultural and historical material that is intended for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as opposed to information that is not appropriate to share with outsiders. Here I follow Margaret Kovach (2010b, pp. 30-36) who delineates the subtleties between insider and outsider knowledges. I also draw from Scott Lyons, whose concept of fencing I explore later in this dissertation. He uses the image of a fence to “keep irreconcilable things apart” (2009, p. 102) referring to Indigenous knowledges that are not appropriate to share with outsiders. Any cultural and historical perspectives I hope to learn from Indigenous curators will be those presented in public spaces and which are appropriate for non-Indigenous audiences.

of the twentieth century,” which “participate in a global movement toward a postcolonial museology” (p. 406). While the movement Phillips refers to does not emancipate museums from their problematic history of perpetrating colonial violence, it does situate some museums as operating in highly collaborative contexts with Indigenous archaeologists and educators. Further, while Indigenous Peoples did not originally establish museums, Indigenous nations do have long histories of taking great care to preserve and protect culturally significant objects, and many cultures hold this in great importance (Cobb, 2005, p. 489). Indigenous experts drawing on traditional teachings to educate diverse, non-Indigenous audiences in museums blurs the lines between the Western museum-as-colonizing-agent, and Indigenous spaces that use objects as sites of learning. The “middle ground” of Indigenous-curated museum spaces provides the context in which I cautiously approach researching Indigenous perspectives on teaching deep history to public audiences that include non-Indigenous learners.

Two of the museums that I visited are national museums, and the other two are local museums, to provide access to a diverse array of learning contexts. The two national museums are the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) (locations in New York and Washington, D.C.), and the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa/Hull. The NMAI states on its website that it has “one of the most extensive collections of Native American arts and artifacts in the world—approximately 266,000 catalog records (825,000 items) representing over 12,000 years of history” from “all major culture areas of the Western Hemisphere, representing...most of those of Canada” (Smithsonian Institution, 2020a). This collection situates the NMAI as one of the most important museums in which to conduct my research. Kevin Gover (Pawnee) is the current director.



The main location in Washington, D.C. is comprised of a large building with several exhibits, films and galleries. The location in New York City holds the Heye Collection of culturally significant objects that span thousands of years, many of which have been arranged by Indigenous educators in an exhibit called “Infinity of Nations” (Smithsonian Institution, 2020b). These objects “...were largely collected by George Gustav Heye (1874-1957)...Today, the objects in Heye’s collection are being reinterpreted by the descendants of the people who made them, providing American Indian [sic] perspectives on the Native past and present” (Smithsonian Institution, 2020b). The galleries at the New York location consist of three long rooms called the East, South, and West Galleries, which are arranged around a central Rotunda (Smithsonian Institution, 2020c). Given this institution’s focus on objects from before European colonization that are interpreted and arranged by Indigenous experts, the NMAI serves as a significant national museum at which to conduct my research. I focus my research at the New York location, but I also visited the Washington, D.C. location.

The second national museum I visited is the Canadian Museum of History (CMH) in Ottawa/Hull. Indigenous culturally significant objects in the CMH are primarily arranged in a gallery called the First Peoples Hall (Canadian Museum of History, 2020). The First Peoples Hall is located on the first floor/lower level of the CMH, along with a variety of mezzanines and salons devoted to different Indigenous cultures. The CMH states that it “celebrates the history, diversity, creativity, resourcefulness and endurance of Canada’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples...Through more than 2,000 historical and contemporary objects, images and documents, the First Peoples Hall depicts the traditional cultures of Aboriginal peoples across Canada” (Canadian Museum of History,

2020). Among the Indigenous educators at the CMH is Linda Grussani (Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg), from territories in what is now Quebec (Craig, 2020). Her specialty is curating Indigenous art, in her words, with the intent to “communicate...to a wider audience. Art can really demonstrate how Indigenous people have been here, are here, and will continue to be here” (Craig, 2020). Grussani’s statement in the above quote offers a valuable perspective on curation by Indigenous experts at the CMH. Her viewpoint is one that links contemporary Indigenous Peoples to their pasts and futures, rather than historicises Indigenous cultures to fixed points in time, such as the immediate contact period. Grussani’s perspective helps situate the CMH as a museum that challenges the colonialism with which many museums have historically represented Indigenous cultures, and thus represents an important national museum at which to conduct my research.

One of the local museums I visited is the Museum of Ojibwe Culture in St. Ignace, Michigan. It is a small museum principally housed in and around a 181-year-old church building and has a “rich archaeological past” (Museum of Ojibwa Culture, 2020a). The museum is associated with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and Becky Simmons is a museum guide/interpreter who often conducts tours (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, 2020). The collections housed in this museum include exhibits with titles such as Unlocking the Silence, Traditional Homes, Technology and Nature, an Ojibwa Migration Chart (Wiigwaasabak), and the Ojibwa Family Network (Museum of Ojibwa Culture, 2020b). Given that my research addresses the Ontario history curriculum, it is important to learn from Indigenous educators who are members of nations that live in what is now Ontario and surrounding territories. Anishinaabe curators at the Museum of

Ojibwe Culture are able to use traditional knowledges to share teachings and articulate historical narratives, for diverse publics, that would be aligned with the Ontario history curriculum.

The fourth museum I visited is housed in the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation at M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin Island. According to the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising, "The Ojibwe Cultural Foundation (OCF) strives to be the identity center of the Anishnaabe people and remains committed to the revitalization and growth of the language, culture, arts, spirituality and traditions of the Anishnaabe People..." (United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising, 2013). Laurie Leclair (2020), a writer for *Anishinabek News*, quoted Kevin Restoule (Government Relations Coordinator at the Anishinabek Nation), noting that the "OCF seems to be much more than a simple storage facility for archaeological collections or even more than just a museum. They are a caring, culturally appropriate home for Anishinaabe Sacred Items" (Leclair, 2020). Leclair explains that the OCF entered into a stewardship agreement with the Province of Ontario to care for the archaeological items, and in 2014 conducted a smudging ceremony to honour the inauguration of the museum section of the OCF. OCF Finance Officer Sophie Corbiere and Archivist and Program Coordinator Naomi Recollect explain that they:

...work with Elders to assure that the collections also meet Anishinabek standards of care and respect. Together, they also hope to augment the OCF's offerings to include a physical expansion of the available area for storage, safekeeping, and ceremonies. They wish to use the sacred and cultural items, when appropriate, to educate students and the public at large. (Leclair, 2020)

Significantly, Leclair emphasizes that it is a priority of the OCF to maintain a high degree of respect and traditional care for culturally significant objects in their keeping. Also important is that the OCF desires to have students and *the public at large* learn from the

educators and the objects in culturally-appropriate ways. These initiatives suggest that the OCF is an excellent example of an Indigenous-curated museum drawing on traditional epistemologies to teach history with culturally significant objects to a diverse public audience that includes non-Indigenous learners. As such, the OCF is an exceptional museum to attend to fulfil the goals of my research.

### **Rationale**

In identifying the area of need in education that this research addresses, it is useful to consider the ways in which scholars like John Willinsky (1998) have identified the ongoing impact of imperialism and colonialism in many academic disciplines. These disciplines include geography, museology and zoology, literature, the sciences, and most of all, education. Willinsky effectively argues that the structure of our educational system is still underwritten by colonial relationships that centre the dominant society contra “the other:”

The question we face today is how the lessons that were drawn from the centuries of European expansion *continue to influence the way we see the world*. Even as imperialism’s “period of real cultural authority” has been eclipsed by forms of neo-colonialism and the new transnationalism of science and technology, many of the ideas of the world generated by imperial designs on it “*retain their position in education*” (emphasis added). (1998, p. 25)

If we accept Willinsky’s above assertion that Imperial ideas of the world “retain their position” (1998, p. 25) in Ontario’s colonially-constructed history curriculum, it remains to be determined how curriculum writers have manifested and applied these ideas. One of the most significant ways in which curriculum writers manifest colonial interpretations of Indigenous deep history involves the Western tendency to name and classify Indigenous culturally significant objects, archaeological sites and culturally significant spaces/places.

Willinsky alludes to this process when he notes the Western proclivity to *re-name* the worlds of “the other,” (as Western explorers did in their dismissal of Indigenous names for these worlds), in the name of science. These acts of re-naming, Willinsky asserts, also carried the presumption that, “it falls to the West to name the world properly” (1998, p. 34). I suggest that Willinsky’s following argument about the colonial tendency to exert ownership over Indigenous places through re-naming them equally applies to Indigenous culturally significant objects.

Naming a place [and, I would include, a *thing*, i.e., a type of historical artifact] is about staking and extending a verbal claim to it...To name is the sovereign act. Even when a name, such as Canada, had originated with indigenous peoples, it was not adopted out of recognition of their claim to the land [neither is it when naming historical artifacts]. (1998, p. 35)

The colonial tendency to identify, rename, and classify is linked not only to a measure of ownership over the cultural legacies of Indigenous Peoples, but also denotes a patronizing stance that shapes the boundaries governing their very recognizability to non-Indigenous peoples. In my experience, Ontario’s history curriculum writers rely extensively on colonial nomenclature. The “othering” effect that colonial violence has had, and continues to have, on Indigenous histories and cultures is palpable. From the vantages of Western science and History, Indigenous cultures “...are reduced to pure spectacle, unable to be other than objects of the fascinated and knowing gaze of the West, as they are explained and made sensible, like puppets, by their learned presenters” (Willinsky, 1998, p. 61). If, as Willinsky asserts, “[t]o name is a sovereign act” (1998, p. 35), then the Western naming of culturally significant objects, and the continuing replication of such terms in school curriculum, perpetuates the colonial power structures that have been used by settler-nations to assert ownership over Indigenous histories. An important component

of my research is therefore to interrogate the nomenclature germane to culturally significant objects as sites of colonial “ownership” of Indigenous histories. It is my contention that colonial interpretations of Indigenous deep history and objects (as the bases upon which the history curriculum of this period is constructed) remain one of the most significant impediments in the move to decolonize and/or reconcile the history curriculum for this era. The lack of Indigenous terminology and nomenclature is one of the missing components that I perceive in the history curriculum. The lack of Indigenous terminology is one reason why I seek to learn from narratives expressed by Indigenous educators using culturally significant objects in museum exhibits.

Willinsky offers us a glimpse into what acknowledging Indigenous control over culturally significant objects might mean for educating the general public when he urges a (re)-visioning of museum curation. He asserts that,

To have Native Americans curating, advising, and repatriating artifacts may disturb without completely unsettling the museum’s placement of the Western visitor at the center of a universe. Rather than seeing their own perspective and knowledge unrelentingly celebrated or seeing the museum as a ledger of ownership, here Western visitors are just that, visitors to a familiar institution that is now in the hands of those whom it once simply put on display. (1998, p. 68)

Although in this quote Willinsky is referring specifically to museums, I argue that a similar dynamic exists for the History curriculum of the period before colonization. For if historical narratives of that period *are* “put in the hands of those whom it once simply put on display” (Willinsky, 1998, p. 68), then teachers like me might better learn how to interrupt the power structures that we may knowingly/unknowingly reinforce when we teach histories that centre settler discourses.

Both archaeologists and museum curators have begun to practice more collaborative

methods in recent years (Atalay, 2008a, 2008b, 2010, 2012, Cobb, 2005, p. 488, Lonetree, 2008, p. 307, Supernant & Warrick, 2014). For History, especially, much has been done in the last few decades to better clarify the experiences of Indigenous Peoples. For example, Peers and Podruchny note that:

Since the late 1970s, scholarship on Aboriginal history in Canada has increased by leaps and bounds. The 1980s and 1990s saw the production of fundamental works on the histories of particular communities and regions and socio-economic and political phenomena such as the numbered treaties, agricultural programs, reserve life and residential schools. (2010, p. 2)

In addition to Peers' and Podruchny's above assertion, and in my experience teaching secondary school History and Archaeology, I notice that curriculum resources like textbooks overwhelmingly privilege historical narratives based on Western scientific archaeology. Earlier I noted that archaeologists "...proposed that the process of inquiry into the prehistoric past be modeled after the physical sciences" (Kennett, 1996, p. 629). The reliance on Western positivist notions of constructing historical narratives has additionally led to legal ramifications concerning "ownership" of the past. Knowledge-Keepers employing Indigenous ways of knowing like oral traditions generally have control over the transmission of these narratives from one generation to the next. Archaeological remains, on the other hand, represent a separate class of resources for Indigenous history and culture, and are distinct from oral traditions since they are the physical remains of culture-histories. However, Indigenous Peoples rarely have legal control over archaeological objects excavated from the ground, especially as they are used to teach about the past in the Ontario education system (Nicholas, 2008b, p. 245). While it is not my purpose in this research to delve deeply into this dynamic, I question the power-structures that have replicated the colonial historical narratives that I see in

curriculum resources. To teach a history curriculum that centers Indigenous histories, I seek to read beyond the colonial perspectives in resources based solely on Western positivist paradigms. This introduces the question of “why is education so far behind museums in decolonizing archaeological and deep history discourses?”

It is also true, however, that many educational sources that focus on current “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies”<sup>7</sup> curriculum do not acknowledge archaeological artifacts and research. The increasing plethora of sources for the current First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2019), which often boldly, rightly, and proudly employ Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing such as oral traditions (e.g., *Sky Woman*, *Nanabush*) are usually and noticeably silent on matters of archaeological/material culture specifics. Sources like textbooks for the secondary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies courses usually refrain from delving into the realm of archaeological nomenclature germane to Western trained scientists (e.g., Filion, McLeod, Methot, O’Brien and Senk, 2011, Reed, Beeds, Eijah, Lickers and McLeod, 2011). It is rare to see in current First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies curriculum any significant references to archaeological concepts like the *Paleoindian*, *Archaic* and *Woodland* time periods, cord-marked pottery, side and corner notched arrowheads, settlement pattern analyses of excavated communities, etc. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, 2015, 2018a/b, 2019, Reed et. al., 2011). That the authours of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies sources have omitted Western archaeological nomenclature effectively highlights the notion that for much of the history of archaeological practice in Turtle Island/North America, archaeologists have conducted

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<sup>7</sup> I use the term “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies” to refer to the diverse array of grades 9-12 secondary-level courses from the provincial curriculum documents that use the term, “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit,” hence it is a term applied to a particular curriculum area.



highly extractive research. Much of contemporary archaeological research continues to benefit Western scholarship at the expense of local Indigenous communities. Kapyrka and Migizi (2016) point out that many archaeologists “continue to remain mired in a colonialist paradigm that continues to deny the rights of Indigenous Peoples” (p. 3). I notice a division in the history curriculum into two distinct “camps,” the first being deep history defined by Western archaeologists, and the second being contemporary Indigenous history defined by Indigenous experts. I suggest that this separation has very real and concrete effects in Ontario’s secondary school system. The separation of these treatments of history in curriculum is notably a problematic way to conceptualize the way Indigenous history is forced into an arbitrary binary system. Nonetheless, professional education documents such as curriculum expectations, and curriculum resources produced to support them, like textbooks, bear witness to the existence of this Western, binary imposition on representations of Indigenous histories and cultures. From my experience teaching courses formatted on this binary, Ontario’s history curriculum draws little connection or continuity between contemporary Indigenous Peoples and the so-called “ancient” Indigenous cultures of Ontario.<sup>8</sup> The radically different ways that Indigenous cultures of the times before and after colonization are approached in History curriculum are by-products of the Western proclivity for centering the scientific method, while relegating Indigenous perspectives to the realm of “folklore.” The treatment of Indigenous ways of knowing in such a condescending manner is an effect of implicit colonialism that Anishinaabe archaeologist Atalay cautions against in the improper application of multivocal approaches (Atalay, 2012, p. 77). Are the two perspectives

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<sup>8</sup> In Western Archaeology, so-called “ancient” Indigenous cultures include everything from the “PaleoIndian” and “Archaic” cultures I mention above, as well as “Woodland” cultures which includes extremely diverse groups of peoples.

irreconcilable? Anishinaabe scholar Scott Lyons cites Anthony Smith, who argues that Indigenous interpretations of the past “must be consonant...also with the scientific evidence of...particular ethnohistories” (Lyons, 2010, p. 147). Similarly, Atalay suggests that:

When equitable partnerships and respectful relationships are forged that give Native Americans power of self-determination over their own spiritual beliefs, ancestral bodies, and the protection of important sites on their traditional home lands, then Native Americans have been willing to work with archaeologists, and often have an interest, even a passion, for conducting archaeological research. Not surprisingly, when Native American input was ignored and their trust and respect violated, the desire to work in partnership quickly dissipated. (2012, p. 35)

In the above quote, Atalay interrupts the notion that Indigenous Peoples are automatically at odds with the work of archaeologists. The ongoing separation of the two distinct ways of knowing leads, in the Ontario curriculum, to the next generation of students who may come to similarly see little connection between “ancient” and “modern”<sup>9</sup> Indigenous peoples. Additionally, Atalay’s quote indicates that it is not archaeology per se that is problematic for Indigenous communities, but rather the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the process, and ultimately the benefits of the research. Amid this split between Western and Indigenous expertise, my research explores a third facet of Indigenous/archaeology interaction: the ways in which secondary school history teachers like me might centre Indigenous narratives in the teaching of deep history.

Western-trained archaeologists often claim that archaeological evidence for Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island/North America dates back to at least 20, 000 BCE.

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<sup>9</sup> In historical and anthropological literature, the term “ancient” applied to the cultures of the Americas usually implies the period *before* European contact. In Europe, however, “ancient” refers to the period of time up to the end of the Roman Empire in A.D./C.E. 476. Terms like “ancient,” “modern,” “prehistoric” and “historic” are therefore culturally biased and problematic terms. I use them in the context of this paper, cognizant of the colonial implications of these terms, and to call attention to the ways they have made “others” of people.

Therefore, according to Western archaeologists, there are at least 22, 000 years of Indigenous history on Turtle Island/North America, if not more (Bursey, Daechsel, Hinshelwood & Murphy, 2018).<sup>10</sup> Much of the Indigenous historical narrative in the Ontario curriculum focuses on Indigenous cultures and histories of the immediate contact period, and the approximately 500 years since. If the curriculum were to all but ignore the deep history of Indigenous cultures (what many colonially-trained archaeologists refer to, as noted already, as “ancient” or “pre-historic” cultures), then approximately 21,500 years<sup>11</sup> of Indigenous history and culture would be left out of the curriculum. This represents roughly 97.7% of the time that archaeologists document Indigenous presence on the continent! Insofar as Ontario’s history curriculum excludes this deep history, the curriculum’s treatment of Indigenous history and culture not only serves to *centre the colonial relationship* between Indigenous Peoples and settler society, but overwhelmingly *privileges settler versions of history*. What is needed is more than to simply “decolonize” the teaching of history curriculum, but to instead centre Indigenous histories and archaeologies. I approach this research cognizant of the sometimes-problematic ways that the term “decolonizing” has been applied in education research, and how the term has often been used in ways that tokenize the term, and to enable what Tuck and Yang and others refer to as “settler moves to innocence”<sup>12</sup> (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 9, Tuck, McKenzie & McCoy, 2016, p. 2, Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019, p. 13). Some

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<sup>10</sup> Some archaeological evidence dates human occupation of Turtle Island/North America back to around 40 000 BCE or more (Bursey, Daechsel, Hinshelwood and Murphy, 2018, Steeves 2017, 2021). If we accept this, then the comparative space in Ontario’s history curriculum devoted to pre-contact Indigenous history is even more problematic!

<sup>11</sup> My use here of the dating systems propagated by Western archaeologists is to call attention to the vast timeline of Indigenous histories that are de-centred/silenced in Ontario curriculum, not to assert that this dating system should be used to define Indigenous histories. Many Indigenous scholars would take issue with the Western timelines for Indigenous presence on Turtle Island.

<sup>12</sup> Tuck and Yang describe “settler moves to innocence” as “tropes...which problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity” (2012, p. 3).

Indigenous scholars have similarly criticized relying on decolonizing perspectives without centering Indigenous perspectives, since the term “decolonizing” also presupposes the centring of colonial relationships (Kovach, 2010a, L. Simpson, 2011, p. 33, Styres, 2017). Margaret Kovach (2010a), for one, suggests this when she asserts:

...paradigmatically speaking, a decolonizing perspective and Indigenous epistemologies emerge from different paradigms. Decolonizing analysis is born of critical theory found within the transformative paradigm of western tradition (Mertens, 2005). It centres the settler discourse, whereas an Indigenous paradigm centres Indigenous knowledges. (p. 42)

Kovach establishes in the above quote that Indigenous and decolonizing approaches are distinct from each other. Sandra Styres (2017) concurs, and emphasizes the continuous nature with which decolonizing strategies accentuate settler discourses:

...Each of these decolonizing practices merely serves to re-engage and recentre colonial relations, as well as reinstalling and re-enforcing colonial practices...Yet decolonizing, while desired in principle, is a process that, by its very nature, is continually (re)centring colonial relations... (p. 35)

In fact, not only does a lack of Indigenous deep history in the Ontario curriculum centre the colonial relationship, it also centres and privileges settler/colonial interpretations of Indigenous history itself, since much of the post-contact Indigenous history curriculum was orchestrated by non-Indigenous historians. Clearly, research is needed to investigate the ways in which Indigenous perspectives might play a central role in the narratives that acknowledge Indigenous presence on Turtle Island since time immemorial. Learning from Indigenous historical narratives will further my research goal of helping me to decolonize my teaching and de-centre Western narratives when teaching Indigenous history.

## **Self-Location**

Many Western scholars have argued that the personal biases of researchers fit prominently into their motivations for doing research, the methodology(ies) they select and use, and in the analysis of research findings (Hatch, 2002, Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2017). Swaminathan and Mulvihill describe this as *positionality*, which they define as “...being transparent about one’s identities: class, race, gender, ideas are all subject to self-scrutiny...Positionality for qualitative researchers is identity work” (p. 98). Similarly, many Indigenous scholars cite the need for researchers to locate themselves as active agents in their research, and to identify how they operate in-relation-with their research (Absolon & Willett, 2005, p. 97, Kovach, 2010b, pp. 114-115, L. Simpson, 2011, p. 19, Styres, 2017, p. 20, Wilson, 2008, p. 35). As I situate myself in my research project, I consider my motivation for conducting the research. Situating my research within a qualitative Western research paradigm,<sup>13</sup> I acknowledge that my own family history, experiences, biases, and identity play powerful roles in affecting my choices of research topic, paradigm, and methodology. Additionally, aspiring to employ an ethical paradigm and research methodology respectful of both Indigenous and Western perspectives (see Methodology), I not only simply acknowledge the roles that my positionality plays in my research plans, but actively embrace them as sources of research purpose and direction.

### **Self-Location from Family History**

Kovach suggests that “In asking others to share stories, it is necessary to share our

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<sup>13</sup> Although Indigenous research methodologies are distinct from Western methodologies (Kovach, 2010b, p. 25), there are also Western and Indigenous methodologies that share presuppositions about how knowledge is created. Kovach asserts that “Indigenous forms of inquiry find an ally in the qualitative approaches that assume the relationally constructed aspect of knowledge production” (p. 34). This may include the critical and co-constructivist paradigms.

own, starting with self-location” (2010b, p. 98). Part of my self-location in researching Indigenous archaeologies in history education derives from my lifelong interest in researching my genealogy and family background. Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree) quotes Lewis Cardinal, who acknowledges the role that family roots play in identity building, for those who either wish to know it or those who feel somehow more complete by knowing it, “I think as human beings, we have a deep connection to these...roots...when you have the young people...who do not have connection to their culture or traditions, they look for these connections. They look for that deeper part of themselves, and I think that is something basic for all of humanity” (Wilson, 2008, p. 94). Following Susan Dion’s (2009) and Wilson’s (2008) use of storytelling to situate their research, I relate some ways that I locate myself in my motivations for my research through the telling of a personal story of my family background. I am acutely aware of the “insider-outsider” nature of researchers who have historically studied Indigenous communities without actually belonging to those particular communities and the problematic histories therein. Therefore, it is important to note up front that I do not assume “insider” status in Ontario Indigenous communities, nor do I claim positionality as an Indigenous person. Still, I believe my position as a history teacher also positions me as responsible to learn from Indigenous experts – so that I can teach – Indigenous history in ways that disrupt the colonial legacies I also inherit and embody. As Kovach reminds us, “By reflecting on the insider/outsider status, researchers prepare themselves for the task” (2010b, p. 50). My reflections on my own positioning in my research, and on my related professional experience has led me to ask/seek answers to my research questions, and to discover what I might learn from Indigenous educators about what I perceive to be

the missing pieces in the curriculum pertaining to deep history.

Since I was a youth, I was very interested in the different genealogical lineages that composed my family history and personal identity. My maternal grandfather worked tirelessly in his retirement years in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario to document as many of the ancestors on both his, and my maternal grandmother's, sides of the family. Unfortunately, my grandmother always seemed to be against my grandfather doing this "poking around," and resolutely refused to speak of anything to do with her side of the family history. "Who wants to know about any of that stuff?" I heard her once say dismissively. At the time, I did not really internalize her opposition to our discovering more about our background, except to ask my mother once about why grandmother disliked the family research. After my mother told me that grandmother was afraid that somebody would "find something out about our family," I laid the matter to rest and gave it little further thought (except perhaps to ask myself, "find out *what?*").

After my grandfather passed away, I reconsidered questions about my family history. My mother and aunt knew that he had gathered a collection of wonderful pictures and stories about our ancestors. Unfortunately, before they could retrieve these, my grandmother had already thrown out the lot, and there was little to salvage of his work, save for the home-made books with only some of the information that he had already made and given to each family member. In the more than twenty years that followed, I have become something of an amateur genealogist, hunting through existing historical records in Kitchener/Waterloo, the Ontario Archives, and a plethora of sources in the United States. As far as my siblings and I were told, our maternal side of the family was all German, of the "Pennsylvania Dutch" communities. Our ancestors in the booklets our

grandfather made included several Pennsylvania German names, like Schnarr, Hammacher, Wilfong, Boehm, Helm, and Schaeffer. My grandfather had spent years compiling more information though. What had been thrown out that did not make it into the home-made books?

My own inquiries led me to the Wilfong side of our family, the only lineage that my grandfather seemed to have hit a “brick wall” in terms of tracing the ancestors back to somewhere in Europe. Through my research, I discovered that the Wilfongs, who were Moravians, did not come to Ontario from Pennsylvania, as did the other German ancestors of my family, but rather from much farther south, in North Carolina (Eby, 1896). There, my Moravian ancestor Jacob Wilfong married Elizabeth Jacobs. What I discovered about my Jacobs and Harmon families of North Carolina and Virginia led me to ask myself if this revelation might be why my grandmother was opposed to disseminating our family history. The earliest Jacobs families in these states were members of the Accawmacke Nation, an Algonquin community originally from Northampton County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia (Britt, 2017, p. 385, Sewell and Hill, 2011, p. 15). More commonly known by their colonial (and derogatory) name “Gingaskin,” Accawmacke Jacobs families met and intermarried with Saponi<sup>14</sup> families on the Gingaskin reservation in Virginia before moving to various parts of North Carolina. Christopher Sewell and S. Pony Hill mention my families when they record “...an immigration of Catawba and Siouan [Saponi] families to the Gingaskin reservation, as reported by Lt. Governor Gooch, and these families...joined (and intermarried with) a pre-established community of mixed white/Portuguese/Gingaskin Indian peoples who

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<sup>14</sup> Saponi peoples are an Eastern-Siouan group who live in Virginia and North Carolina.



bore such surnames as Harman...Jacobs...” (2011, p. 15).

Royce Gildersleeve summarized the fate of the Gingaskin reservation in a 2013 conference presentation to the American Historical Association:

In the seventeenth century, a native American [sic] tribe called the Gingaskins accepted an offer from the English government which established a portion of their traditional lands as a reservation. After an initial period of accommodation and cooperation, relations between the Indians and the English began to deteriorate. Seeking to acquire Gingaskin land, the colonists maintained that the Indians were not cultivating the land to its fullest. Even more significantly, they became more and more alarmed as the native people began to intermarry with local free blacks...To combat this growing fear, English colonists initiated a series of legal claims to void the earlier treaty and dispossess the Gingaskins of their land. Their argument was that the people living on the Eastern Shore were not Indians, only blacks who claimed to be Indian...In 1812, an American court forced the members of the Gingaskin community to dissolve the reservation and divide the land amongst themselves. The following year Virginia's General Assembly passed legislation terminating the Gingaskin Indian reservation, the first instance of termination and allotment in the history of the United States. (2013)

Investigating the termination of the Gingaskin reservation further, I obtained a copy of the hand-drawn map of the reservation as it appeared at the time of allotment in 1813. Although my direct Jacobs family had left the reservation before 1813 for North Carolina, a James Jacob[s] remained and was allotted a parcel of land on the north side of the now-defunct reservation. This map has become a significant “family history artifact” that serves as a reminder of the many ways colonialism has displaced families and subjected Indigenous communities to economic, linguistic, and cultural loss. It is also a personal anchor that reminds me of the ways that I have, historically, consciously or unconsciously denied/been unaware of *my* role in the difficult discourse of colonialism between Indigenous Peoples and settler society. Drawing on this lost-but-rediscovered family history, I ask myself: how I have, as a settler, benefited in the present from the losses of

Indigenous peoples and their histories, including even those of my own distant ancestors?

As Dion notes,

However distant Canadians argue that they are from the instance/site/relationship of violence/oppression/injustice, it is their very recognition of being implicated that motivates their denial. How are they connected/not connected: on what grounds are they being called to attend and on what grounds do they respond? (2004, p. 61)

I choose to respond by continuing research on my background, a significant contributing factor that motivates me to conduct my dissertation research. The family history that I discovered constituted a “missing piece” of my identity-knowledge that was absent during my formative years. The fact that it may have been purposefully hidden has caused me to confront the ways that my family and I have been implicated in the ongoing colonial experiment insofar as we have benefited as settlers. Uncannily, I have noted a similar dynamic of omission in my work as a teacher. The “loud silence” that I have noticed in History curriculum, the absence of Indigenous perspectives, suggests a “missing piece” also purposefully hidden by the historical bias of the settler curriculum, that has also motivated me to do this research.

### **Self Location from Archaeology Interest**

Aside from having some potential Accawmacke background, my motivation to do history and education research in particular includes objects of archaeological significance. Kovach’s questions, “What is your purpose for this research? How is your motivation found in your story?” (2010b, pp. 114-115) lead me to position my research interests in the study of material culture. Ever since I was a youth, I can vividly remember placing great personal importance on the objects (e.g., books, decorative items) that I kept in my personal spaces. Without being able to articulate the sentiment in this

way as a youngster, I nonetheless had the sense that my things, my “stuff,” really served as outward expressions of my personal identity. A sandstone Maya statue lovingly carved (intended for sale) by a resident of Mexico near the formerly-inhabited city of Chichen Itza and purchased by my father as he leaned out of our tour-bus window when I was ten held a special place on my shelf. It would be a constant reminder of the awe I felt experiencing the remnants of an “ancient” culture for the first time, and a promise to myself to never stop learning about the Maya (the promise has since changed to “continuing to learn *from* the Maya”). Later it would serve as an example of the subtle nature of colonial inequalities between Western tourists and Indigenous residents, and the commercialization of cultural legacies. An aluminium Samurai sword set (decorative only-not sharp!) rested in stately poise on its stand by my window, a visual reminder of my lifelong interest in, and practice of, martial arts. This unconscious expression of identity through my possessions was brought to my attention starkly when, moving to Waterloo to work on a bachelor’s degree, I brought a collection of my things with me to have at hand there. When a new friend first entered my room, their response was a stark, “This is a *stuff* room!” Increasingly, I find that objects I select and care for say a lot about who I am, my interests, and what I find important. This identity-expression through artifacts led me to the realization that when my life is over, I may pass on my prized possessions to others, but these others will not have the same relationships with the objects that I did. I began to perceive of archaeology as a process of picking up the self-expressive possessions of the ancestors and attempting to understand their motivations, ceremonies, cultures, and identities from a perspective of stewardship, rather than ownership, over the culturally significant objects. This personal perspective, told through

story, can be one way of thinking about my positionality when it comes to the great significance that I place on the study of artifacts and material culture, and how history curriculum itself is in part constructed from sources like these. The great significance I place on our lovingly crafted and used items can be called *spiritual*, not in the religious sense (although for many people these relationships may also be thusly expressed). Rather, the significance of objects may be spiritual from the assumption that it is not only the objects themselves that are important so much as the *relationships* they imply, between the objects, their makers/users, and the Land (A. Simpson, 2014, p. 49, L. Simpson, 2014, p. 9, Styres, 2017, p. 47, Wilson, 2008, p. 120, Zinga & Styres, 2011, p. 61). I conduct my research cognizant of my presupposition that culturally significant objects and their relationships to their makers and users are of the utmost significance, both to their original makers and to the descendant communities to which they rightfully belong.

### **Self Location from Educational History and Professional Teaching**

My studies at the university level have also had significant impact on my self-location in this research. Fascinated with archaeology as the study of the material expressions of personal and cultural identities, I completed a joint-honours Bachelor of Arts in History and Anthropology with an Archaeology focus. In this work, I was trained in the positivist, and to a lesser extent, postpositivist paradigms that have suffused most archaeological methods and narratives since the 1960s. My education through the K-13 grades and university has been co-constructed by curriculum writers and applied by teachers and professors who, consciously and/or unconsciously, have subscribed to settler logics. Settler logics situate Euro-Canadian histories as the dominant narratives and Euro-

Canadian positivist sciences as intellectually hegemonic over non-Western ways of knowing. Dion alludes to this hegemony when she points out that “How and what teachers communicate about Aboriginal people is based not on an arbitrary decision but is established on a long history of how Aboriginal people have been positioned in relation to non-Aboriginal people” (Dion, 2009, p. 64). Contemplating on this knowledge/power-trail throughout my schooling has led me to confront and refute the fallacy of the “absolute” nature of knowledge, a fallacy which is perpetuated by positivist Western sciences and which permeated my undergraduate studies (Battiste, 2013, p. 120, Wilson, 2008, p. 100).

Furthermore, my professional career has powerfully shaped my approach to my research. Since 1998, I have been a Canadian and World Studies teacher in Ontario’s secondary school system, and since 2010, a teacher of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies Ontario curriculum courses. Working with Indigenous teachers as part of a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies professional learning community, I learned about traditional, Indigenous ways of knowing such as oral traditions and vision quests. In fact, the high school in which I teach is built beside/on top of an archaeological site excavated just before the school was built in 2002. Since then, I have actively used this content to develop and teach a grade 12 Archaeological Studies course (*Interdisciplinary Studies IDC4U*). I am also a founding member of my school board’s Indigenous Education Steering Committee, a panel which directs the implementation of the 2007 First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework across the school board (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). On this committee, I work with and learn from Indigenous community members who are Knowledge-Keepers and Elders. Our goal has been to

implement First Nations, Métis and Inuit education in K-12 contexts that currently align with the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

Increasingly, my professional teaching work has been greatly influenced by Indigenous scholars and teachers. Because of that influence, it has become easier to reflect on how my own presuppositions about knowledge construction, both as a student and ongoing as a teacher have been forged by Western paradigms that must be confronted and re-assessed. It has become clear that my understandings about knowledge and epistemology were powerfully influenced by colonially-constructed power dynamics, which have sanctioned, and continues to perpetuate, colonial violence. An example of this violence is implicit in the teaching of deceptions such as the *terra nullius* myth, the false colonial assumption that Turtle Island/North America was “empty” and open-for-the-taking by European settlers (Bruchac, 2010, p. 366).

The above familial, academic, and professional factors influence my understanding of both traditional Western methods of constructing archaeological discourses (that are often positivist and quantitative in nature), and traditional Indigenous ways of knowing that are inherently qualitative and relational in nature (Kovach, 2010a, p. 40, Wilson, 2008, p. 120). The former I learned from Western academia, the latter from Indigenous teachers, Knowledge-Keepers, and Elders, and from researching my family background and scholarly literature. I am therefore walking along two learning pathways. I not only try eagerly to learn from both, but at times struggle with my personal knowledge framework, when these two pathways sometimes seem to be at odds over what kinds of knowledges are privileged. This conflictive frame of reference leads me to witness the area of need in curriculum that my research addresses, which subtly and surreptitiously separates these

two narratives in Ontario's curriculum pertaining to deep history. This frame of reference also influences my desire to undertake research that might challenge the perceived incompatibility and opposition of these knowledges in Ontario history education.

As I situate myself in this research project and conduct fieldwork, I ask myself difficult questions about the nature of knowledge and my own assumptions and presuppositions about how it is situated and constructed. Re-assessing my assumptions about knowledge-production is particularly significant as I research in museums with exhibits organized by Indigenous educators, who centre historical narratives from Indigenous ways of knowing rather than from orthodox Anthropological/Archaeological science. Marie Battiste (Mi'kmaw) (2013) reminds us that "[w]hen Eurocentric science is the official knowledge base, it operates from a position of power, a position that is also relegated to the highest order and thus to receiving priority in funding by the state and national organizations" (p. 123). Re-considering my education about Western methods of knowledge-construction leads me to realize that claims about the "unbiased/impartial" nature of science and the "universality" of conclusions based on Western scientific methodology are little more than tools utilised by those with the power to direct curriculum. With that power, curriculum writers have continuously replicated colonial logics that position Indigenous histories and cultures as inferior to those of settler society.

After considering the ways I locate myself in my research, I return to the topic of my museum inquiry with some final thoughts. Conducting research in museums required that I attend to the roles that power plays in knowledge-construction, and that I continually reassess how I am examining museum galleries curated by Indigenous experts. I ask myself how I am implicated in developing my knowledge of what I think I am seeing,

vis-à-vis the history of my own schooling. I ask ongoing questions like, “How am I looking at these museum exhibits? How do my understandings of how power-relationships forge historical narratives for curriculum use implicate me in a position of power? How am I resisting relying on colonial understandings of privilege and knowledge-construction in order to learn from Indigenous educators about the historical narratives that are being presented?” Questions like these led me to consider how researchers must resist colonially-sanctioned concepts of knowledge-ownership that replicate the myth of “unbiased” research. Throughout my education in scientific Archaeology courses, supposedly “unbiased” researchers were situated as the knowledge-power brokers, sanctioned with defining historical narratives based on the fallacy that Western scientific methods allow researchers to arrive at “universal truths” about culture-histories. This perspective situates positivist researchers as the “owners” of the knowledges they condone. Rather than regarding myself as the active and objective researcher, extracting what-I-want-to-know from a supposedly-inactive body of data, I instead ask how I as the researcher am one component of a learning process in-relation-with the exhibits and galleries from which I am co-constructing learning. As Wilson (2008) reminds us, “...if knowledge is formed in a relationship, it can’t be owned” (p. 114). Scholars Kathy Absolon (Anishinaabe) and Cam Willett (Cree) further suggest that “...if you want to do ethical research that accurately represents who it is for and who it represents, then you have to be positioned in it and connected to it...it is unethical to do research in which you have no stake whatsoever...” (Absolon and Willett, 2005, p. 104). The missing pieces that I have noticed in history curriculum in Ontario schools, the missing pieces from my family history that shaped me in my formative years (and



ongoing), and my experiences as a student and educator have, in part, defined how I understand my relationship to my research project. By continuing to emphasize the ways that researchers like me might resist ingrained colonial assumptions about knowledge and power might, it is hoped, lead me to ask "...questions that will unravel the knotted interconnections of knowledge and power; who is speaking to whom, on whose behalf, and in what context" (Dion, 2009, p. 75)? A review of the literature pertinent to my research will continue to speak to the ways that I am positioned in-relation-to my project.

### **Scholarly and Professional Literature Review: Indigenous Archaeology, Ontario**

#### **Curriculum, and Museum Studies**

Several scholars have researched collaborative archaeology (between settler-archaeologists and Indigenous communities) (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2007, Ferris, 2009, Oland, Hart and Frink, 2012, Silliman, 2008, 2012, Supernant, 2018, Supernant and Warrick, 2014, Zimmerman, 2010) and Indigenous archaeology (done by Indigenous professional archaeologists using Indigenous methodologies) (Atalay, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2010, 2012, Two Bears, 2006, 2008, Kapyrka, 2011, 2014, 2018, Kapyrka and Dockstator, 2012, Kapyrka and Migizi, 2016, Wobst, 2010). In addition, many scholars have investigated Indigenous histories in museum settings and in history school curriculum (Battiste, 2013, Blackhawk, 2010, Carpio, 2008, Chavez-Lamar, 2008, Cobb, 2005, DeLugan, 2008, Dion, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2016, Fowler, 2008, Lonetree, 2008, Nakamura, 2014, Singer, 2008, Smith, 2008, Styres, 2017, 2019, Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy, 2014). Here I examine these areas of literature to define how, through my research, I examine issues at the crossroads where the above topics merge, with a view to learn from Indigenous archaeology in museum contexts to transform my understanding of

how to teach Indigenous history in K-12 classrooms.

## **Indigenous Studies**

My research draws extensively from the work of Scott Lyons (Ojibwe/Dakota) (2009, 2010), who deftly interrogates philosophical concepts as they are often applied to Indigenous Peoples. These concepts include Indigenous nationalism, sovereignty, identity, and fencing.<sup>15</sup> Probing conventional definitions of these concepts, Lyons's work provides grounding for my research as I investigate how my understanding of Indigenous nationalism<sup>16</sup> help me learn from Indigenous educators, who interpret objects in ways that challenge and redefine the historicization of Indigenous Peoples.

Lyons interrogates the concept of cultural *hybridity* in much of his work, largely as a threat to Indigenous cultural sovereignty (2009, 2010). The goal of my research is not to explore ways that Indigenous perspectives can be *blended with* Western perspectives to ask what a hybrid method of interpreting history based on culturally significant objects might entail. Lyons (2009) criticizes the concept of hybridity, especially as it relates to the irreconcilable differences between Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language, and English. He suggests that language is one expression of sovereignty, and that "Sovereignty...requires a sense of...separation that hybridity will always contest...If anything, sovereignty requires the making of a fence, not to keep things out, but to keep

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<sup>15</sup> Lyons uses the term *fencing* to illustrate a teaching he learned, and was given permission to share, from an Elder. In this context, "good fences make good neighbours," not necessarily to keep things out, but to keep things in. This is in reference to some Indigenous teachings and knowledges that may not be appropriate for sharing with people outside the Indigenous community and therefore are inappropriate for use in schools (Lyons, 2009, p. 79).

<sup>16</sup> Lyons thoroughly interrogates the appropriateness of applying the term "nationalism" to Indigenous groups, pointing out that the concept is based on the word/concept "nation," which is a post-industrial modern concept (2010, p. 115). However, he notes that nationalism, when used to make an "x-mark," a conscious manifestation of Indigenous identity to "protect old values" and "while calling for a society based on...*more life*...my answer to the nationalism question, however hesitant, has got to be Yes" (emphasis in original) (2010, p. 164).

important things in” (2009, p. 79). Lyons bases the concept of fencing on an Elder’s rule he learned, “about keeping irreconcilable things apart” (p. 102). Therefore, I approached my research respectful of what Indigenous educators choose to keep apart from public display. From Lyons, I learn that Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing as they are used to teach public audiences about the past in museum contexts also constitute sovereignty in a cultural sense, and that attempting to blend or hybridize Indigenous perspectives with Western ones serves to advance and empower the colonial project.

Aside from the concept of fencing, one very important contribution that Lyons makes to the theoretical discussion of Indigenous identity includes his frequent allusion to “x-marks” as identity-defining actions, and the related notion that identity is predominantly constructed and expressed through acts of *doing* (actions) rather than through states of *being* (inert) (2010, p. 60). Lyons identifies x-marks as literally the marks that many Indigenous signatories made on the historical Treaties (2010, p. 1). He elaborates, however, to draw on the metaphor of contemporary x-marks<sup>17</sup> as being examples of Indigenous identity-expressing acts of doing. Lyons explains the concept of identity-as-doing rather than as-being when he argues that:

...Indian identities are constructed...they do not come from biology, soil, or the whims of a Great Spirit, but from discourse, action, and history; and finally, that this thing is not so much a thing at all, but rather a social process. Indian identity is something people do, not what they are, so the real question is, what should we do? (2010, p. 40)

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<sup>17</sup> Lyons provides many definitions and examples of what he refers to as x-marks, but an exemplar is that: “The x-mark is a contaminated and coerced sign of consent made under conditions that are not of one’s making. It signifies power and a lack of power, agency and a lack of agency. It is a decision one makes when something has already been decided for you, but it is still a decision...it is always possible...that an x-mark could result in something good. Why else, we must ask, would someone bother to make it? I use the x-mark to symbolize Native assent to things (concepts, policies, technologies, ideas) that, while not necessarily traditional in origin, can sometimes turn out all right and occasionally even good” (2010, pp. 2-3).

It is not my cultural location or right to attend to Lyons' question "What should we do?" Rather, learning from Lyons, I consider my research on Indigenous-curated museum galleries as historical narratives, the construction of which are actions that people "do," rather than as galleries showcasing what people "are" in a static sense. Lyons provides a poignant addition to the notion that gallery-narrations are acts-of-doing by stating that:

Finally, another benefit [of seeing Indigenous peoples not as *things*, but as people who *do* things] could be a counterattack to the genocidal implications that are always inherent in the notion of an Indian identity as timeless, stable, eternal, but probably in the minds of most people still "vanishing." Being vanishes. Doing keeps on doing. (2010, p. 60)

Learning from the theoretical framework that Lyons expresses in the above quote, I learn how Indigenous educators author gallery exhibits that disrupt images of Indigenous identity that portray cultures as "timeless, stable, eternal" and "vanishing" (Lyons, 2010, p. 60). Such portrayals in colonially-constructed museums have, in the past, historicized Indigenous cultures. Lyons offers a perspective from which to frame my viewing of Indigenous galleries that problematize the concept of an exhibit as a static portrayal of culture. I understand Lyons' critique of cultures as "timeless, stable, eternal" not as denials of Indigenous cultures existing on Turtle Island since time immemorial, but rather as suggestions that cultures change over time. I perceive that Lyons is suggesting that it is change experienced by Indigenous cultures over time, particularly those changes caused by interaction with settler cultures, which has profoundly affected conceptualizations of identity and given rise to Indigenous nationalism.<sup>18</sup>

Dwayne Donald (Papaschase Cree) (2009a, 2009b, 2012), in his work on the research

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<sup>18</sup> Throughout this literature review, I articulate my perceptions of these authors' works. My interpretations are not necessarily those of the authors, and other readers may interpret the ideas in the literature differently.

sensibility of Indigenous Métissage, would concur with Lyons' view of the need for Indigenous-settler interaction to be sites of respectful exchange. Donald contributes his own ideas in a discussion of ethical relationality, which holds much in common with Lyons' idea of maintaining respectful relations through concepts like fencing:

Ethical relationality is an ecological understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, but rather seeks to more deeply understand how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other. This form of relationality is ethical because it does not overlook or invisibilize the particular historical, cultural, and social contexts from which a particular person understands and experiences living in the world. It puts these considerations at the forefront of engagements across frontiers of difference. (Donald, 2009a, p. 6)

Donald's above iteration of ethical relationality speaks to Lyons' theorizing on identity-making as actions-of-doing (rather than only as states-of-being) and of respectfully working together while "keeping irreconcilable things apart" (Lyons, 2009, p. 102). Here my point is not to suggest that respectfully relating to, and working with, others are determinants of identity. It is rather to suggest that it is most appropriate to learn about others through the aspects of people's own identities that each distinct side in an interaction decides is appropriate to share. In this facet of interaction, *aspects* of identities and culture-histories, appropriate for sharing, can serve to respectfully (re)build relationships.

Donald outlined the need for respectful interactions across "frontiers of difference" in his explanation of ethical relationality (2009a, p. 6). The concept of "frontier" is one that Lyons also uses to theorize on the problematical history of Indigenous-settler interaction. Both scholars' explanations of the concept of the frontier contribute to my understanding of how the term is notably used in the phrase "frontier logics." The phrase "frontier logics" implies the colonial nature with which settler societies have historically defined

and imagined Indigenous Peoples, resulting in the perpetuation of colonial violence. Lyons describes the concept of the frontier as one that has historically abetted imperial assimilationist policies:

Thinking historically means seeing different Indian spaces invented in different times and social contexts, and in fact our spaces have been imagined in many different ways...At first, Indian space was isolated and always on the move; its image was the *camp*. On occasions when Native and newcomer had to meet, the space for doing so was a *frontier*. The Frontier was traditionally conceived as the line where Civilization meets Wilderness, the latter as yet untamed by the former, so the concept is inseparable from imperialism...As for the Indians imagined on the wild side of the line, they would either stay in their camps and vanish or evolve into someone who might yet live on the civilized side of time and space. Such was the logic of a world cut in two by imperialism. (2010, p. 16)

In the view of frontier logics that Lyons explains above, the term “frontier” presupposes settler’s imperialistic attitudes towards Indigenous Peoples. Lyons’ work on the concept of the frontier speaks to Donald’s ideas in this area, as it does with ethical relationality. In explaining his own perspective on frontier logics, Donald (2012) contributes the metaphor of the *fort*, that suppressive bastion of colonial military authority:

The metaphor of the fort is powerful because it conjures up so many conflicting images of colonizer and colonized, the duality of insider/outsider, and the differing relationships to land and place. Yet, the fort represents commonality of place for both Aboriginal peoples and Canadians, even though they have differing perspectives on its significance...Deconstructing colonial frontier logics – mythically symbolized by the fort...will help lessen this divide. (p. 543)

Donald’s description of forts as sites of conflict, but at the same time as representing “commonality of place” for Indigenous Peoples and settlers (2012, p. 543) offers important guidance on how both museums and history curriculum can be identified as forts. In their historical appropriation of Indigenous culturally significant objects with which they represented “colonizer and colonized” (Donald, 2012, p. 543), museums can

certainly be characterized as forts in Donald's version of the theory. Similarly, schools can be identified as forts, for through colonial curriculum, narratives of "the duality of insider/outsider" (Donald, 2012, p. 543) have been tirelessly reiterated. Lyons' and Donald's contributions to the literature on Indigenous identity and relationality with settler societies offer an educative path forward for me in situating my museum research.

### **Western Archaeology and Indigenous Archaeology**

Much of the historical record from the time before the arrival of Europeans in what is now Canada, as well as the time period immediately after, is accessed through archaeological culturally significant objects and sites. For more than a hundred years, the archaeologists who have had almost exclusive access to, and power over, the excavation, interpretation, storage, and display (i.e., curation) of Indigenous culturally significant objects have also authored the scholarly literature for their discipline (Bursey, J, Daechsel, Hinshelwood, & Murphy, 2018, Ferris, 2009, Fiedel, 1990, Kennett, 1996, Renfrew and Bahn, 1991, Steeves, 2017, 2021). Colonially-trained archaeologist's interpretations of Indigenous archaeological items and features have historically served as the basis for Ontario's history curriculum resources like textbooks.<sup>19</sup> Archaeologists excavated (some might say pillaged) many archaeological objects from sites that Indigenous Peoples

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<sup>19</sup> For examples of textbooks that rely on colonially-trained archaeologist's versions of history, see Roberts (2006), who offers three and a half pages to the role of archaeology in learning about aspects of Indigenous cultures prior to the contact period. It mentions the terms that archaeologists have used to demarcate Indigenous history, such as Paleo-Indian, Archaic, and Woodland Periods, and briefly lists artifacts usually considered "representative" of these cultures from mainstream archaeology (e.g., arrowhead styles) (pp. 24-27). Also, see Brinkley (2015), the author of a PACE-level American History textbook, who wrote that "For many decades, scholars believed that all early migrations into the Americas came from humans crossing an ancient land bridge...The migrations were probably a result of the development of new stone tools...all of these land-based migrants are thought to have come from a Mongolian stock related to that of modern-day Siberia...Archaeologists believe that they lived about 13,000 years ago" (pp. 2-3). The derogatory tone of passages such as this is made more pointed by the fact that this textbook is intended for the Advanced Placement (AP) section of the course. In AP classes, students are encouraged to participate in high levels of critical analysis. Further, this is a 2015 source, which is the same year that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released their findings after years of research!

consider sacred, and these materials often include human remains. This kind of contemporary colonial theft and appropriation is akin to the *Indian Act*'s banning and criminalization of sacred ceremonies such as the potlatch in 1884 (Davidson and Davidson (Haida), 2018, p. 27) and the sun dance in 1895 (Miller, 1990, p. 395). Archaeological theft and ceremony-banning exemplify paternalistic attitudes towards Indigenous Peoples, with the caveat that while the bans of the *Indian Act* were dropped in 1951 (Davidson and Davidson, 2018, p. 5), the "stewardship of archaeological remains of Indigenous people...[still] lies with the state and its agents" (Warrick, 2017, p. 90). The lack of participation that Indigenous Peoples have had in archaeological projects contributes to the traumatic and appropriated history of groups who place a high degree of sacred importance on the resting places of ancestors, traditional sacred places and sacred Land, and culturally significant objects that were used in sacrosanct ceremonies, such as clay pipes (Tallbear, 2017). The discriminatory belief that contemporary Indigenous Peoples and their traditional ways of knowing have little ability to illuminate our understanding of the past has exacerbated the trauma of this appropriated history.

Contemporary Indigenous archaeologists, whose work I review below, have established the scholarly field of Indigenous archaeologies (Atalay, 2012, Bruchac, Hart & Wobst, 2010, Kapyrka, 2014, 2016, 2018, Oland, Hart & Frink, 2012, Warrick (non-Indigenous), 2015, 2017). Professional archaeological associations like the Canadian Archaeological Association (CAA) and the Ontario Archaeological Society (OAS) are finally making progress in forging new partnerships with Indigenous communities (see Figure 1). These archaeological associations have employed policy documents to address a historical lack of cooperation with Indigenous communities. For example, the CAA's



*Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples, 1997* (Canadian Archaeological Association), and the OAS, which adheres to the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture's *Engaging Aboriginal Communities in Archaeology, 2010* (Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture, 2010), both constitute literature that lays the groundwork for ongoing partnerships with Indigenous communities for the collection, interpretation and, eventually, storage of culturally significant objects. As this progress is being made, however, two concerns stand out. First, although partnerships are enshrined in the documents, some experts, even from the colonially-trained archaeological community, question whether they are resulting in Indigenous communities having authority over the cultural remains excavated on traditional lands. For example, Kisha Supernant (Métis) (2018), citing other archaeologists, suggests that:

While archaeologists often consult Indigenous communities before doing research, many projects do not reach the collaborative stage on the collaborative continuum (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2008) and it remains uncommon for Indigenous communities to have a right to refuse archaeological work on their territory or have control over the results of the research (Supernant & Warrick, 2014). In addition, most archaeologists working across the spectrum of archaeology remain non-Indigenous and largely white (Martindale and Nicholas, 2014). (p. 145)

The concern Supernant raises here is that Indigenous communities are included in Archaeology in only a cursory way. A second complication with collaborative research projects is that they can unintentionally “promote certain perspectives of the past at the expense of other descendant communities or members of the same community who lay claim to the same past” (Supernant & Warrick, 2014, p. 564). At issue here is a concern that, despite the language of collaboration, colonial perspectives remain dominant. A third concern about these partnerships, and one particularly relevant to my research, is that even though Indigenous communities may recently have had greater participation in

archaeological activities carried out on ancestral lands, it remains the prerogative of the K-12 curriculum and textbook writers to generate the narratives that powerfully advantage settler-colonial interpretations of archaeological materials in curriculum resources. Partnerships like the ones alluded to above and in figure 1 are silent on the matter of the *educational implications* of their findings for the general public and K-12 students. The hope that the effects of these partnerships will somehow “trickle down” to be included in K-12 history curriculum by course expectation and textbook writers in the future is not a sufficient approach to address the TRC’s Calls to Action in education.

Since the 1990s, and especially since the implementation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990 in the United States, many colonially-trained archaeologists have forged partnerships with Indigenous communities when conducting research on the time period before colonization. Stephen Silliman (2008) notes that these partnerships have been alternately referred to as “collaborative,” “indigenous,” “ethnocritical,” “covenantal,” “internalist,” and even “new vision” archaeology (p. 2). For the purposes of my research, I follow Indigenous archaeologists (e.g., Atalay, 2008a, 2010, Kapyrka, 2011, 2014, Supernant, 2018, Two Bears, 2006) in utilizing the term “indigenous archaeology” or “indigenous archaeologies” to signify archaeology done by Indigenous archaeologists using traditional and/or Western methods, since “the practices of such approaches remain fluid and situational and thankfully dodge any attempts at systematization or universal codification” (Silliman, 2008, p. 2).

Many Indigenous scholars have been critical of Western disciplines such as Anthropology and Archaeology since they have historically omitted and silenced Indigenous perspectives (Deloria Jr., 1988, Dion, 2009, p. 4, Zimmerman, 2010, p. 69).

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous archaeologists who have extensively contributed to the growing field of Indigenous Archaeology include Sonya Atalay (Anishinaabe) (2008a, 2008b, 2012), Julie Kapyrka (Anishnaabe) (2010, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018), Stephen Silliman (2008), Larry Zimmerman (2010), Kisha Supernant (Métis) (2018), Gary Warrick (2015), and Davina Two Bears (Diné Navajo) (2006, 2008). Atalay has pioneered a highly collaborative approach with local descendant communities in her archaeological work, based on Paulo Freire's dialogical model (2008a, 2008b, p. 129, 2012). Atalay's contribution to the literature of Indigenous archaeology is particularly significant in the discussion of multivocality in collaborative History/Archaeology research between Indigenous and settler experts. Having Indigenous voices as well as the dominant Western historical narratives present in Ontario history curriculum is an example of a *multivocal* approach. Atalay asserts that:

The discipline of archaeology is not inherently good or bad; it is the application and practice...that has the potential to...be used as a colonizing force...The goal is not to replace Western concepts with Indigenous ones, but to create a multivocal archaeological practice that benefits...society more broadly...it is precisely this form of multivocality that Indigenous archaeologists are calling for...In thinking about multivocality as an Indigenous archaeologist, I do not aim to simply present Indigenous interpretations of the past or to make room for multiple perspectives at the interpretive table. Rather, it is a much deeper level of multivocality...which will have a more fundamental effect...from the planning stages to the final sharing and presentation of research results. (2008a, p. 33-34)

While Atalay's teaching on the merits of a multivocal approach are insightful in the above excerpt, in a later work, she more powerfully isolates a danger in misapplying multivocal approaches to solely interpreting Indigenous history:

Integrating the two is different from simply presenting them as alternative interpretations, as some multivocal approaches do. A critical analysis of multivocality reveals that it is not necessarily empowering; at times, it can be detrimental...The normative view from conventional science is often

given priority, whereas Indigenous...approaches and information are relegated to the realm of quaint folk knowledge. (Atalay, 2012, p. 77)

Atalay's above point is an integral one, as it gives voice to a recurring problem that I suggest exists within many Ontario curriculum resources. To illustrate this, a brief example is presented from the textbook *First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples* (Roberts, 2006), in which the Beringia Theory of the origins of Indigenous Peoples is given three pages, the biggest subsection of which is titled "The Evidence" (referring to archaeological evidence) (p. 10), while two subsequent pages are given to discussing highly controversial theories by archaeologist Jeffrey Goodman (a non-Indigenous archaeologist) who suggests that *Homo sapiens* evolved first in California before spreading across the globe long ago (Roberts, 2006, p. 13). Roberts moderates this perspective by suggesting that "Although few scientists accept Goodman's theory, many First Nations and Inuit peoples support it" (p. 13). At first glance, this may seem to masquerade as a multivocal approach, however no Indigenous experts are cited, nor are any Indigenous accounts of human origins offered in the resource. Clearly, Atalay's concern about Indigenous information being "relegated to the realm of quaint folk knowledge" (2012, p. 77) when presented alongside Western science has some credit in Ontario school curriculum! Atalay's work informs my research especially through her cautionary assertion that while multivocal approaches lead to the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in historical and archaeological interpretations, collaboration must become normalized at *all* stages of research.

Julie Kapyrka (2010, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018, Kapyrka and Dockstator (Oneida), 2012) writes widely on the colonial nature of Western Archaeology and its seeming reluctance to accept Indigenous ways of knowing as equally valid as dominant Western approaches.

Kapyrka and Dockstator outline a “two-worlds” approach to the interaction of Indigenous and Western ways of knowing (2012). Their work describes how this approach might relate to environmental education. For instance, the two-worlds model uses Indigenous and Western knowledge systems together, where appropriate, to help students learn about a topic. Importantly, Kapyrka and Dockstator note that the two systems are not somehow blended together. Rather, each knowledge system maintains its integrity and acknowledges the differences between them (2012, p. 106). They therefore seem to be in agreement with Lyons’ contention that hybridity contests Indigenous sovereignty (Lyons, 2009, p. 79). One example Kapyrka and Dockstator offer of a two worlds approach is a collaborative initiative between the Indigenous Environmental Studies, and the Environmental and Resource Science, programs at Trent University. Kapyrka and Dockstator state that “The program uses Indigenous knowledge systems, Western science, and information from the social...sciences to explore...environmental issues impacting Indigenous peoples” (p. 105). Providing clarification for that example, and the other examples of two-worlds approaches that they cite, Kapyrka and Dockstator acknowledge that their approach shares much with Dwayne Donald’s concept of *Métissage* (p. 105), explored later. Considering Kapyrka’s and Dockstator’s approach in light of Atalay’s, however, raises interesting considerations. Atalay (2012) warns strongly against simply presenting Indigenous perspectives alongside Western ones, lest Indigenous interpretations be “relegated to the realm of quaint folk knowledge” (p. 77). The problem of multivocality that Atalay raises requires researchers to attend to the ways in which power plays a directive role in sanctioning which knowledges are considered legitimate in historical narratives. Atalay’s, Kapyrka’s and Dockstator’s contributions to the field of

Indigenous archaeology clearly establish approaches to research that both demand the integrity of both methods, and call for full partnership through every stage of research.

Other Indigenous/Indigenist archaeologists such as Kisha Supernant (Métis) (2018, Supernant and Warrick, 2014), Davina Two Bears (2006, 2008), and Larry Zimmerman (2010) have explored the complicated relationships that have developed between colonially-trained archaeologists and Indigenous communities. Kisha Supernant (2018), for example, notes that “While archaeologists often consult Indigenous communities before doing research, many projects do not reach the collaborative stage on the collaborative continuum” (p. 145). If, as Supernant asserts, many research projects are not truly collaborative, then how can History curriculum based on professional research accurately include Indigenous perspectives? To explore this question, Two Bears (2008) challenges the conceptual binary between colonially-trained archaeologists and Indigenous Peoples. She argues that Indigenous Peoples can and do become professional archaeologists. On this point, she asserts that “It is no longer accurate to frame discussions as between “Indians and archaeologists,” because in this day and age many Indians are professional archaeologists, and our numbers are steadily increasing” (2008, p. 190). Supernant, Warrick, Two Bears and Zimmerman are among the professional Indigenous/Indigenist archaeologists that offer valuable contributions to the field of Indigenous Archaeology, and collectively do much to redefine the ways that archaeologists are seen as co-operating and/or conflicting with the values of traditional Indigenous communities.

Stephen Silliman (2008, 2012) is another archaeologist that has contributed to the literature on Western vs. Indigenous Archaeology, and the former’s problematic portrayal

of the history of Indigenous Peoples. He identifies a binary system of thought and interpretation, sometimes unconsciously used by colonially-trained archaeologists, which is significant to my research, particularly as it relates to how History curriculum writers have portrayed the history of Indigenous Peoples. He identifies useful conceptual frameworks that are commonly used in settler History and Archaeology literature that he refers to as the “short purée” and the “long durée” (2012). The “short purée” is the view that the colonial encounter was the “decisive moment in indigenous histories,” which “halts those histories” and that “Indigenous people who pass through that...gateway are...seen as...altered” (2012, p. 113). This is in contrast with the “long durée,” an approach in which some archaeologists re-contextualize the impact of colonialism “in light of long-term Indigenous histories that span centuries, if not millennia, before the arrival of European colonists,” which “grants primacy to Indigenous agency...and permits a view of Indigenous action as contributing...to the direction of history” (p. 114). Critics of viewing Indigenous history through the lens of the short purée might suggest that it has limitations and colonizes history in many ways, for example by situating “Indigenous histories within, rather than intersecting, colonialism, thereby shortening them” (Silliman, 2012, p. 115). On the other hand, critics of the long durée view suggest that “Just because we *can* study histories...over many centuries does not mean that we always *should*” [referring to a desire to centre the impact of colonization on Indigenous Peoples] (Silliman, 2012, p. 118). The temporal distinction of short and long history has not only characterized archaeological constructions of the times before and after colonization, but, I argue below, also the narratives of Indigenous deep history that are written into Ontario’s K-12 history curriculum. The “short purée,” in fact, characterizes

part of the dynamic I perceive in the Ontario history curriculum, in which discourses of Indigenous cultures before colonization are rendered as mutually-exclusive from those of the post-contact period (see above). Silliman's work in identifying and articulating the long-and-short modes of historical representation with which many authors have written about Indigenous archaeology and history offers a valuable, and cautionary, framework for my museum research. To what extent do Indigenous educators, through museum exhibits, both demonstrate the longevity of Indigenous history and accentuate the ramifications of colonial contact as learning opportunities? Many of the above-referenced Indigenous/Indigenist archaeologists theorize on particular concepts like multivocality, ethical partnerships, two worlds approaches, and collaboration. Silliman's contributions, however, situate all their works within a methodological framework that draws attention to the ways that historical scope is applied to narrative-construction.

### **Ontario Education Literature**

Many Indigenous scholars of education such as Dion (2009), Sandra Styres (2017, 2019), and Marie Battiste (2013, p. 105) have described the need for curriculum approaches that challenge and problematize colonial stereotypes and narratives within education. Dion cites Piper's definition of pseudorationality as "an attempt to make sense of such data under duress...to preserve the internal rational coherence of the self, when we are baldly confronted by anomaly but are not yet prepared to revise...our conceptual scheme accordingly" (Dion, 2009, p. 59). Paul Chaat Smith defines a similar challenging concept as cognitive dissonance, asking the question,

...why wasn't I taught that in school? [Referring to troubling settler-Indigenous histories] The problem isn't that it's controversial. It's something else, what psychologists call cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance; defined as a psychological conflict resulting from incongruous



beliefs and attitudes held simultaneously...This becomes extremely problematic when designing an exhibit for a mainstream audience, because museums traditionally are not about challenging visitors' most deeply held beliefs. (Smith, 2008, p. 136)

In the context of these glaring gaps, the Ontario Ministry of Education has taken steps toward including Indigenous perspectives in schools in the 2007 *First Nations, Métis and Inuit* (FNMI) *Education Policy Framework*, which demands the “Integration of educational opportunities to significantly improve the knowledge of all students and educators in Ontario about the rich cultures and histories of First Nation... peoples” (p. 17). This demand has presaged the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) 2015 *Calls to Action*, which confirms the need for Indigenous voices in curriculum, specifically *history* curriculum, for example in section 63, in which

We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including: i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history... (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a)

Given the lack of scholarly research dedicated specifically to how K-12 teachers like myself might appropriately center Indigenous narratives of deep history<sup>20</sup> in our teaching practice, my research project is both timely and essential.

Indigenous scholars of education have contributed to a growing body of literature from which I can learn, to provide a developing framework for my research. Dion's research is invaluable to my project. Dion (2004, 2007, 2009, 2016, Dion & Salamanca, 2014) has researched, among other topics, how teachers interact with/teach Indigenous

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<sup>20</sup> By using a phrase like “Indigenous historical narratives of deep history” in contexts like this, I am referring to narratives forwarded by Indigenous museum curators, archivists, archaeologists, and educators *in public educational contexts* like museums, which might be appropriate for sharing with public audiences, and not to private Indigenous knowledges that would be inappropriate to share with non-Indigenous peoples.

perspectives on history. Her research highlights many of the difficulties that non-Indigenous teachers have when incorporating Indigenous histories in the classroom. These include dominant settler discourses that “position Aboriginal people as romantic, mythical Others (2009, p. 78) and teacher’s reliance on their own pedagogical scaffolding, which “normalizes teachers’ approaches to teaching Aboriginal subject material in schools,” where “Some knowledge becomes lost in the scaffolding, and some knowledge the scaffolding cannot support” (2009, p. 103). Dion’s research is invaluable to my own, serving as a model of how to approach ethical ways of incorporating Indigenous historical narratives into curriculum, remaining cognizant of the multiple ways that teacher experiences can reinforce and/or challenge stereotypes.

Sandra Styres (Haudenosaunee) (2017, 2019) and Dawn Zinga and Styres (2011) have written significantly on the nature and importance of capital-L Land to Indigenous Peoples. Among their many important implications of the notion of Land include that the Land is “spiritual, emotional, and relational; Land *is* experiential, (re)membered, and storied; Land *is* consciousness—Land *is* sentient” (emphasis in original) (Styres, 2019, p. 27). Similarly, Renée Mzinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard (Nishnaabeg-kwe) (2008) is a noted expert on Indigenous relationships with water as the lifeblood of Mother Earth, and Warren Cariou (Métis) has researched Indigenous notions of animate Land through intercommunication with sacred medicines such as sweet grass (2018). Concepts of Land and water figure prominently in my museum research on Indigenous historical exhibits, since Western and Indigenous representations of these concepts often powerfully contrast. Colonial archaeologists generally treat the earth and water at archaeological sites as meaningless context for the more importantly-regarded culturally significant objects. I

suggest that this practice and attitude has been subsumed by, and pre-supposed in, Ontario's history curriculum when constructing the narratives of deep history. My research draws on the work of Styres, Bédard, Cariou, and other authors to investigate to what extent Indigenous interpretations of archaeological sites and objects in museum galleries might incorporate traditional notions of Land and water. Such interpretations may significantly alter the way archaeological sites and culturally significant objects are used to inform the historical discourses in my teaching of history.

Including the research by Dion and Styres mentioned above, Marie Battiste (Mi'kmaq) (2013), Vine Deloria, Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) (1988), Audra Simpson (Kahnawake Mohawk) (2011), Dwayne Donald (Papaschase Cree) (2009a, 2009b, 2012), and Jo-Ann Episkenew (Métis) (2009) are some of the prominent scholars that identify and articulate Indigenous ways of knowing that inform my research. Audra Simpson's research, for example, continues Vine Deloria Jr.'s (1988) famous critique of North American Archaeology and Anthropology when Simpson states "It is the anxiety of disappearance [of the supposed "vanishing race" of Indigenous Peoples], the desire, then, for a pure subject, for pure difference defined according to white, Western, and fundamentally "expansionist" ontological core that authorized U.S. anthropology" (2011, p. 207). Battiste, who researches concepts like cultural imperialism, culturalism, and Indigenous sciences and humanities, presages the focus of one of my research questions:

Although efforts have been made to sensitize teachers to part of the cultural and psychological context of Indigenous pupils through in-service programs, little has yet been done to include a realistic portrayal of their knowledge, languages, *heritages*, *histories* (emphasis added), or governments into the standard curricula. (2013, p. 31)

Expanding on the lack of Indigenous pupils' histories and knowledges in curriculum,

Battiste goes on to assert that “There is no right for Indigenous peoples to offer their own self-representation in curricula, or their own visions for education, because all of that was decided by elite groups who decide what goes into the curricula, how much, and from what perspective” (2013, p. 32). Battiste and other scholars have contributed significantly to treatises of education that help researchers to understand how colonial scholars have historically positioned Indigenous Peoples as “vanishing,” decontextualized from Land and history. In my museum research, I hope to learn more about how Indigenous scholars use culturally significant objects to interrupt these colonial narratives and centre Indigenous notions of history.

Also working in the context of education, Dwayne Donald (2009a, 2009b, 2012) explores the difficulties inherent in decolonizing education research and in Indigenous-settler relations. Drawing on the research sensibility of Indigenous Métissage, he investigates what it means to carry out research between/among Indigenous and settler peoples, working within the difficulties that respectful interaction between distinct viewpoints can create. His research provides a basis upon which to investigate how Indigenous perspectives of culturally significant objects might be similar to/different from dominant Western perspectives and how differences might be included in ethical ways in history curriculum. Donald (2012) hints at similarity/difference in perspectives when he posits that,

Artifacts are imbued with meaning when human hands craft them, but also when human beings conceptualize them as *storied* aspects of their world. So, for example, a rock can be considered an artifact when it is fashioned into an arrow point. However, at the same time, a rock can also be considered an artifact if it is directly associated with a particular place and the history, culture, language and spirituality of a particular group of people. (p. 542)

Donald points out an important distinction between Western and Indigenous concepts of

what constitutes an “artifact.” Western notions of artifacts tend to rely on positivist criteria such as “...humanly made or modified portable objects, such as stone tools, pottery, and metal weapons” (Renfrew and Bahn, 1991, p. 41). Donald’s identification of artifact-criteria is much more inclusive and relational, positioning cultural objects within a network of relationships that include criteria external to the immediately-observable qualities of an object. From Donald, I apply this relational artifact-criteria to my museum research and learn from Indigenous educators. I show how Indigenous curators locate cultural significance in objects, and how that significance contests Western positivist criteria.

## **Museum Studies**

Literature pertaining to museum curation by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars frames my research and prepares me for conducting field work in museums curated by Indigenous experts. In particular, the literature written by Indigenous museum educators can illustrate commonalities between the learning contexts I am researching in Indigenous museum settings, and those in history classroom settings. Additionally, a review of the museum literature can provide a basis for me to ask questions about the kinds of narratives and culturally significant objects that are important to Indigenous museum educators and general educators.

The literature by Indigenous museum experts establishes many commonalities between learning in museum contexts that have been developed for diverse publics, and how learning might be considered in history classrooms that incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing. For example, Atalay (2006) suggests that:

Museums play a critical role in painting a picture of the people, communities, and cultures they portray; they create a resonant “take-home”

message for visitors. In this way museums shape the public mindset and have an effect on policy in this country and internationally. (p. 599)

In the same way that Atalay suggests in the above quote for museums, I suggest that learning in the period history classroom also plays a critical role in constituting the kinds of cultural “pictures” students take home with them, and therefore ultimately has a similar effect on future policy. To highlight even stronger examples of how the museum learning experience shares similarities with the classroom, note how Atalay describes how Indigenous educators approached exhibit-planning at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).

...museum professionals [like teachers] do not assume they have a unitary public [like a student body], and they are increasingly attempting to reach visitors who will engage with the museum [or curriculum] in very different ways. Some will browse the exhibits visually, others will read all the text carefully, and yet others will engage with the exhibits using a combination of reading and visual skills...To effectively communicate a message to the “streakers” (those who quickly walk through and predominantly visually browse the exhibits), the “strollers” (those who engage with displays for a longer period of time exploring both visual and textual materials), and the “readers” (those who take more time and read all the text presented in an exhibit) requires sophisticated layering...and demands the attention of experienced curatorial staff [or teachers] with the highest level of expertise in museology [or curriculum] practice. (2006, pp. 612-613)

Like museum visitors, history classrooms are composed of diverse learners who might be characterized as “streakers,” “strollers,” and “readers,” and therefore the work of Indigenous educators specifically teach me to approach my research as a learner, seeking the connections between the ways Indigenous educators structure learning experiences, and what this means for history teachers seeking to centre Indigenous perspectives in history curriculum.

The work of Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche) provides further insight into the ways that the work of Indigenous educators in museum contexts parallels that of history teachers.

Smith is one of the curators at the NMAI and worked there with Dr. Jolene K. Rickard, a Tuscarora artist and scholar (Smith, 2008, p. 133). Smith cited Dr. Rickard saying that, in the museum, “the physical space [of the exhibit, akin here to the teaching of history] must reflect the exhibit’s [curriculum’s] central idea that history changes and is a matter of perspective,” (p. 135), and that “We tell visitors that although the past never changes, the way we understand it changes all the time. We say that all histories have agendas, including ours” (p. 140)...and further, that “We imagined the exhibit as a beautiful excavation site, where history is buried, lost, and found” (p. 138). Curatorial approaches like these, I suggest, are also appropriate ways to consider learning approaches in the history classroom to centre the kinds of narratives stressed by Indigenous educators.

Amanda Cobb (now Cobb-Greetham) (Chickasaw), currently Director of the Native Nations Center, is an Indigenous curator whose work also provides valuable insight on how education in museum settings can closely mirror that in history classrooms. She asserts that “...exhibitions must be curated collaboratively with the Native peoples they seek to represent. As a result...the museum employs “nontraditional” (by museological standards) methods of care and preservation, display, and classification, and privileges Native conceptualizations of history and truth” (Cobb, 2005, p. 493). Such collaboration as it relates to history curriculum must also centre non-traditional (by curriculum standards) conceptualizations of Indigenous history. Noting the dissonance this approach might create with learners who might have their colonial assumptions and preconceived notions of settler histories disturbed by this approach, Cobb recommends, for example, that the NMAI:

should not attempt to offset visitor frustration by reverting to the more familiar exhibition styles; to do so would be tantamount to calling the entire

project—a project so significant to cultural sovereignty and continuance—a failure. Instead, I recommend that the NMAI find ways...to prepare visitors for what they will experience, letting them know that they will be asked to “read” differently and asking them to rise to the occasion. (2005, pp. 504-505)

Cobb’s work echoes that of several other Indigenous scholars like Paul Chaat Smith, who cites Jolene Rickard, asserting that “there is no safe space inside the museum: the museum is always part of the larger social forces in the world” (Smith, 2008, p. 133). Again, I suggest that classroom spaces can duplicate curated museum spaces in this aspect.

The work of non-Indigenous scholars like Anne Whitelaw (2006) and Vermeulen and Pilcher (2009) also provides valuable insight into the often-troubling ways that culturally significant objects have been used/misused in museums, serving to further refine my understanding of how colonial forces have influenced the ways that objects can be sites of learning in both museums and in deep history curriculum. Whitelaw, for example, has assessed the ways that Indigenous art and artifacts have been positioned in museums and art galleries like the National Gallery of Canada (2006), and Vermeulen and Pilcher have done similar research on online museums (2009). They have discussed in detail the historical proclivity of Western museums to frame Indigenous culturally significant objects and education through what James Clifford has called the “salvage paradigm” (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202, Vermeulen and Pilcher, 2009, p. 63). Under the aegis of this paradigm, Western institutions considered that the “vestiges of pre-contact “primitive” societies needed to be preserved as artifacts of the most authentic period of non-Western cultures’ existence” (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202). While the “salvage paradigm” has been widely discussed as it relates to the use/misuse of culturally significant objects in



museum contexts, the work of these scholars can situate my research by offering insight into how the salvage paradigm has been at work in the curriculum pertaining to deep history. I suggest that this curriculum has historically relied on the salvage paradigm as interpreted through the lens of Western archaeology, for example by focussing on historical narratives constructed on the interpretation of such artifacts as arrowheads and potsherds. These kinds of culturally significant objects are the main staples in Western archaeological interpretations, but they are ones that feature what, from colonial perspectives, might be called “primitive artifacts” that are, in curriculum, often situated in contrast to “advanced” European equivalents, and therefore position Indigenous cultures as inferior, or less developed than settler cultures. This positioning contributes to a discourse that Dion has identified as the “romantic mythical other” (2009, p. 78).

Whitelaw goes further to identify the role of critical Anthropology in the 1990s, which analyzed “the role of exhibitions in the construction of the Aboriginal object as either “art” or “artifact” (2006, p. 203). She suggests that, for Western curators, “In order to present objects as having value, their historical status and their uniqueness needed to be emphasized,” (2006, p. 202), furthering the colonial agenda of separating historical Indigenous culturally significant objects from contemporary, living cultures. She explains that:

Explanations for the Gallery's reluctance to systematically acquire historical [post-contact] First Nations objects bring us back to the fundamental tenets of the salvage paradigm and the broadly held view that Aboriginal objects are of ethnographic rather than aesthetic significance. As was discussed above, the value of Aboriginal objects lay in their ability to testify to the creative products of a vanishing culture, and to an imagined pre-contact authenticity that could not be recovered. As artifacts, then, such objects had no place in an art gallery, where the significance of works was based on a conception of the aesthetic that, although putatively universal in designation, is effectively both historically and geographically specific to nineteenth- and

twentieth-century Euro-North American conceptions of artistic and economic value. (2006, p. 204)

The highly colonial mindset with which Western scholars have viewed Indigenous culturally significant objects that Whitelaw identifies here is also criticized by Anthropology professor Robin Maria DeLugan (Cherokee, Lenape). DeLugan (2008), examining the NMAI's incorporation of culturally significant objects from Indigenous nations in what is now Latin America, asserts that culturally significant objects there too have been appropriated by government institutions to further a nationalistic agenda of defining the modern nation state:

The ability of Native communities in Latin America to stay intact during epochs of nation building was assailed by national policies and ideas about the “modern” nation that attempted to eliminate Native rights and Native difference while coopting ancient Native culture as symbolic of a unique and original deep history useful for representing national identity. (p. 387)

Echoing the process identified here by DeLugan, I have found that in Ontario's history curriculum, there are similar narratives that serve to co-opt Indigenous culturally significant objects and histories as indicative of “Canada's Native Peoples,” or “Canada's” pre-history, for the purposes of national identity-building. Traditionally, history curriculum has been used to construct/reconstruct a narrative of Canada as being established by English and French “founding nations,” with subsequent labour and contributions of immigrant peoples. Situating Indigenous cultures in the past tense in these narratives has not only perpetuated the view that Indigenous cultures are vanishing, but it has facilitated the co-opting of “ancient” Indigenous cultures in the colonial Canadian nation-building project. The scholarly literature from Indigenous (and Indigenist) museum educators, then, effectively assists me in situating my research by offering powerful insight into the ways that teaching and learning with/from culturally

significant objects are similar in both museum and classroom contexts. In addition to museum-curriculum connections, a review of the scholarly literature from Indigenous educators can prepare me for my research project by beginning to identify the kinds of objects and the narratives to which they might speak, that are important to Indigenous educators.

One trend in the literature from educators from which I have learned is the importance that many Indigenous educators place on deep history. Indigenous educators stressing long term history suggest points of comparison against which to illustrate many of the harmful losses of the colonial/post-contact period. The significance of the pre-contact period in history curriculum, in part based on its extremely long time span compared to the post-contact period, is a central part of my argument. In the literature review of Indigenous Archaeology, I outlined the short *purée* vs. long *durée* identified by Silliman (2012). The following literature from Indigenous educators speaks to these concepts in the context of museology at the NMAI. W. Richard West (Southern Cheyenne, Arapaho), was the founding director of the NMAI. In an interview with Amanda Cobb, he noted that the NMAI:

...is not just about the cultural destruction, and the reason it isn't is because, as horrible as that story was for Native peoples, when one thinks of it, we've been here the better part of twenty thousand years. Even if you collapse this period of destruction into about five hundred years, you're still talking about 5 percent of the time we've been here. (West and Cobb, 2005, p. 521)

In fact, Cobb independently reinforces West's deep-history emphasis above, stating that "...a museum of Americans developed by American Indians would never take 1492 as its historical beginning point; American Indian history since European contact is only a small part of a much deeper history" (Cobb, 2005, p. 489). The consideration of how

much to accentuate deep history at the NMAI was so compelling that some Indigenous critics of the galleries at the NMAI criticized what they thought was a *lack* of focus on the time period before colonization. Others note instead that the focus of the Washington, D.C. location of the NMAI galleries is on contemporary Indigenous societies as a way of presenting how traditional teachings are informing Indigenous People's lives today, in part to counter historical stereotypical representations of Indigenous culture (Dion, personal communication). Amy Lonetree (Ho-Chunk) is one of those scholars dissatisfied with the single exhibit in the *Our Peoples* gallery that features 250 figurines intended to demonstrate the vast diversity of Indigenous nations before 1492 (Smith, 2008, p. 138). She asked:

If “the centuries of war, disease, and exile” is “only about 5 percent” of the broad sweep of our history, as West claims, where is our earlier history? There is no extensive treatment in this museum of our pre-Columbian past in any of the galleries... The time depth argument is important and could serve as the principal illuminator of our deep history in these lands, but treatment of our ancestral past is not presented prominently at the NMAI in any of the three inaugural exhibitions. (Lonetree, 2008, pp. 312-313)

In the above quote, Lonetree calls attention to the importance of historical narratives that acknowledge Indigenous presence on Turtle Island since time immemorial when educating the public in museum settings. Myla Vicenti Carpio (Jicarilla Apache, Liguna, Isleta) (2008) similarly criticizes the lack of emphasis on the period before colonization in the NMAI galleries, pointing out the tendency in wider (North) American society to render Indigenous history as “invisible.” She situates Indigenous history as “*the* “absent presence” in American history, deliberately erased or radically transformed to reinforce and maintain the master narrative (Carpio, 2008, p. 291, emphasis in original). Like Lonetree, Carpio points out that:

West tellingly noted that indigenous peoples' history spans twenty thousand years and that the worst of it has been 5 percent of that history. This does not explain why the museum's chronology begins in 1491 in the Our People's gallery, focussing on tribal histories, misleading visitors to assume that Indigenous peoples came into existence only when they entered European consciousness. (Carpio, 2008, p. 295)

Carpio's above assertion echoes that of many of the other Indigenous educators cited above. The literature from Indigenous museum experts helps me situate my research by elucidating the significance of Indigenous approaches to deep history as modes of identity-construction and the "illuminator of [Indigenous People's] deep history in these lands" (Lonetree, 2008, p. 313). It prepared me for learning from Indigenous educators how to position Indigenous narratives of deep history in classrooms.

One more way that a review of the literature by Indigenous educators can locate my research project is through an examination of how educators might view culturally significant objects themselves. Above, I highlighted the proclivity of Ontario's limited curriculum pertaining to deep history to be based on Western positivistic scientific methods. This approach generally considers culturally significant objects to be little more than the material from which they are made, and interpretation focuses on the uses to which they might have been put. Indigenous educators, however, teach me how Indigenous perspectives on the objects themselves problematize colonial settler notions of artifacts, which is one the most important research questions I seek to answer.

Museology and curation, and the Western science of Archaeology for that matter, are not among the practices traditional to Indigenous societies before the contact period. Cobb, however, leads us to re-cast this binary by challenging the ways we traditionally define museology. She asserts that:

It is true that the museum as a specific concept is foreign to Native peoples;

however, caring for and cherishing cultural patrimony is not, regardless of commonly held scholarly views on that matter...the assertion that “non-western people are not concerned with the collection, care, and preservation of their cultural property . . . has frequently been used to justify the collection (or some would say plunder) and retention of non-western people’s cultural property in museums.” Caring for cultural property is hardly a new idea for Native people, and indeed, may exist at the center of many cultures. (Cobb, 2005, p. 489)

Learning from Indigenous educators about how culturally significant objects are considered in Indigenous museums help me to understand how Cobb’s “Caring for cultural property is hardly a new idea for Native people” might be expressed in museums and in curriculum (2005, p. 489). For example, Nakamura (2014) researched the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford, Ontario, and noted that there were Indigenous critics of how some of the culturally significant objects were maintained there. He discovered that:

Some critics felt uncomfortable about objects being displayed inside glass cases. For those Indigenous visitors, the objects should not have been separate from living people. They viewed the objects differently, in terms of their sense of ownership, spirituality, and memory, even though the exhibition story was told from an Indigenous curator’s perspective. (p. 150)

Nakamura identifies Indigenous critic’s views of culturally significant objects being much more than simply the component pieces and materials from which they were made. Cobb corroborates this sense of culturally significant objects being alive, when, considering the curation of tribal museums fostered through tribal epistemologies, she notes that “These techniques are based on the belief that many cultural objects are alive rather than inanimate and often require curators to allow them to “breathe” rather than suffocate in sealed plastic containers” (Cobb, 2005, pp. 493-494). The ability of culturally significant objects to breathe is an example of a teaching that challenges Western, positivist notions of the roles of historical objects in education. Studying

Indigenous-designed galleries of culturally significant objects as sites of learning has taught me to better understand the kinds of narrative challenges, and the educator's ways of sharing those narratives, that the educators relate in public education contexts, and how they can inform my teaching of History curriculum. Historical narratives in the classroom, however, must centre Indigenous ways of knowing and tribal epistemologies.

### **Textbooks and Curriculum Supplementary Materials**

In my research of museum galleries organized by Indigenous educators, I was mindful of my critical perspective. As a part of interrogating the power structures inherent in Ontario curriculum and learning from Indigenous educators in museum contexts, I closely examine Ontario curriculum documents and history textbooks. Detailed textbook analyses are not a central component of this dissertation, and deserve a much broader dialogue than is possible here. However, a brief critical examination of History curriculum resources will help to situate my research. Many of the contemporary history textbooks used in Ontario have one or a few central or "senior" authours, but include a long list of additional authours and reviewers (e.g., Bragdon, McCutchen and Ritchie, 1998, Newman et. al., 2001, Appleby et. al., 2010). Additionally, the authours of history textbooks written for Ontario students rarely use the pronouns "I" or "we," and maintain formal writing conventions throughout their books. This can create tensions and/or challenges in terms of student's and teacher's abilities to identify the social locations from which the authours write. This practice can further problematize the assessment of curriculum resources, since the practice presupposes that the authours write from a position of objective neutrality. Authours are named in textbooks for assigning writing credit, however refraining from identifying authours who make historical and/or cultural

interpretations or claims about a group interrupts the apportionment of responsibility for the particular ways in which peoples and cultures are situated.

Several scholars have contributed to the literature that focuses on the significant role that textbooks play in student learning. Some analyses employ/utilize models that assess textbook author's use of literary devices such as vocabulary (e.g., Kinder, Bursuck, and Epstein, 1992, Okeeffe, 2013) Others examine supplementary resources from perspectives based on grounded theory and heuristic frameworks (e.g., Morgan and Henning, 2012), and still others assess textual and visual narratives throughout the textbooks (e.g., Fine-Meyer and Duquette, 2017). As I examine curriculum resources through a critical lens, I note the ways that contemporary textbook authors iterate and situate Indigenous histories and cultures using archaeological materials to teach to students. It is therefore the works of scholars who have assessed the ways that textbooks have contributed to the colonial experiment through portrayals of Indigenous Peoples and cultures that help to inform my research (e.g., Carleton, 2011, 2017, Francis, 1997, Gibson and Case, 2019, Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, 1974, Richardson, 2005). For example, in 1974, the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood published an extensive study about the ways in which textbook authors represented Indigenous Peoples, and found that "...social studies textual materials give a derogatory and incomplete picture of the Canadian Indian" (Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, 1974, i). Although that study was published in 1974, Carleton (2017) notes about that study that "after almost a half-century, its analysis and recommendations are still relevant" (p. 162). Carleton bridges the study of representations of Indigenous Peoples in textbooks from the 1970s to the present when he asserts that:



Since the late 1970s, scholars...have convincingly argued that cultural products...need to be understood in context as reflecting and defending the power and privilege of their colonial producers. Textbooks, for example, are not just accidentally racist. They are reflections of educational curricula and government policy...that, intentionally or not, reproduce and legitimize colonialism and justify continued Canadian nation building. (2017, p. 164)

As I carried out my research in museums, I was confronted with my undergraduate university training in history and archaeology that used books that “are not just accidentally racist” (Carleton, 2017, p. 164). I also confronted my experience in teaching history at the secondary level, using school board-approved textbooks that “reproduce and legitimize colonialism” (Carleton, 2017, p. 164).

Historian Daniel Francis provides further insight into the ways that school textbooks replicate colonial notions of Indigenous Peoples. He notes that the discriminatory depictions of Indigenous Peoples were “supposed to teach us a view of history which rationalized the assimilationist policies being carried out by our government. In effect, we were being educated for racism.” (Francis, 1997, p. 79, Carleton, 2011, p. 104). As I consider the school curriculum’s supplementary resources that Ontario school boards authorize, Francis and Carleton’s work remind me to be mindful of depictions of Indigenous Peoples that serve to justify colonial and assimilationist agendas.

Eve Tuck (Unangaġ, Aleut Community of St. Paul’s Island, Alaska) corroborates Francis’ identification of racism in textbooks, as well as Carleton’s suggestion that the kind of racism being taught to students “is not just accidentally racist” (Carleton, 2017, p. 164). In a media study conducted for the *Toronto Star*, Tuck examined contemporary history textbooks that contained information on residential schools. She provided a series of examples from a textbook published by Nelson in which the terminology served to

diminish the abuses of residential schools. Nelson's textbook asserts that, "*Some students were stripped of their birth names...Teachers were sometimes abusive...Students usually did not receive enough food...and many times were given rotten food*" (Francis, 2021, citing Tuck, emphasis in original). In this example, Tuck identified an "understated description of the kind of violence that happened through the creation of residential schools. They talk about it almost as though it was accidental" (Francis, 2021). Tuck's brief analysis of history textbooks reminds me of the ways in which resource authors can implicitly use terminology to diminish or temper racist ideologies that are designed to enable what Tuck and Yang have referred to as "settler moves to innocence" (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 9).

While I refrain from conducting formal textbook analyses in my research, my reading of the contributions of scholars who assess curriculum resources frames my research in the museum galleries. To learn about the historical narratives that Indigenous scholars and educators centre in museum contexts for general audiences, I confront the ways in which curriculum authors depict Indigenous histories and cultures in the textbooks I have used. I consider, anecdotally and with concrete examples, ways in which contemporary school resources may be giving "a derogatory and incomplete picture" of Indigenous Peoples (Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, 1974). I interrogate long-used textbooks for discernable ways they may "reproduce and legitimize colonialism and justify continued Canadian nation building" (Carleton, 2017, p. 164). I question the ways in which students in Ontario classrooms are "being educated for racism" by textbooks I have used (Francis, 1997, p. 79, Carleton, 2011, p. 104). I also consider the terminology implemented by textbook authors that may implicitly situate colonial forces, agendas,

and effects as “accidental” (Carleton, 2017, p. 164, Francis, 2021, citing Tuck).

Figure 3 demonstrates a conceptual location of my research. Figures 1 and 2 highlight the common-ground areas of professional and scholarly research between Indigenous communities and the public education sector, and between Indigenous communities and colonially-trained archaeologists/historians. My research occupies the middle ground between them, investigating how an ethically relational model of inquiry might be envisioned to center Indigenous interpretations of history deep to address what is missing from the history curriculum in schools (see Figure 3).

## CHAPTER TWO

### Theoretical Framework and Methodology

#### **Methodology: Critical Theory**

Secondary curriculum's treatment of the deep history of Turtle Island is firmly situated in colonial knowledge structures. Curriculum, lessons, resources, and teacher-instruction in History and Archaeology are purposefully designed to replicate colonial power structures to perpetuate a status quo that benefits what Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez and other scholars have referred to as "settler futurity" (2013, p. 80).<sup>21</sup> My contentions about the History curriculum situate my project firmly within critical and co-constructivist research paradigms that rely on decolonizing methods.

The critical methodology I employ as a theoretical framework focuses on issues of power, injustice, and researcher reflexivity in the pursuit of knowledge. Scholars of methodology offer useful definitions of critical theory, which I draw on to inform my research design. Hatch (2002), for example, suggests that "Knowledge within...[critical theory] is subjective and inherently political," and that it "is always "value mediated" in the sense that "the investigator and the investigated...are assumed to be interactively linked, with the values of the investigator inevitably influencing the inquiry"" (citing Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 110) (p. 16). Hatch emphasizes that scholars of critical theory "...produce critiques of the perceived material world in an effort to expose the structures that ensure the maintenance of control by those in power" (p. 17). Similarly, Bogdan and

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<sup>21</sup> E.g., Tuck and Yang, (2012, p. 3), and Goodyear- Ka'ōpua (2019) discuss the same concept of settler futurity. In this dissertation, I follow Tuck, Yang, Gaztambide-Fernandez, and Goodyear-Ka'ōpua's definition of settler futurity, in which "Anything that seeks to recuperate and not interrupt settler colonialism, to reform the settlement and incorporate Indigenous peoples into the multicultural settler colonial nation state is fettered to settler futurity" (Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013, p. 80). Settler futurity "requires the containment, removal and eradication of autochthonous peoples" (Goodyear- Ka'ōpua (2019, p. 86).

Biklen (2007) define critical theory as “An approach to thinking and researching that emphasizes research as an ethical and political act. Critical theorists agree that their research should...work toward the elimination of inequality and injustice” (p. 271). Swaminathan and Mulvihill (2017) likewise define a critical approach as “...a focus on questions that have to do with injustice or control, and attention to power issues, an emphasis on researcher reflexivity...and a focus on reporting ideas that go against prevailing thought” (p. 8). These explanations of critical theory provide a foundation for thinking about my research question, which identifies an injustice and situates me, the researcher, in a relationship with the focus of my study, for the purpose of contesting colonial power structures in the established History curriculum. My central research question is: **What culturally significant objects do Indigenous museum educators share with the public in museums to teach deep history, and in what ways do these representations address, bear witness to, and/or disrupt the troubling colonial narratives on which both education and museums are predominantly based?**

To address my research question through a critical methodology, I begin from the assumption that the supposed “universal truths” of Western scientific conclusions are [tools] used by those in power, such as curriculum and textbook writers, to justify the colonial curriculum and perpetuate its status quo. I perceive that critical methodology connotes questions of power-politics, matters of injustice, researcher-reflexivity, and conclusions that disrupt and counter the prevailing thought in a discipline. My asking how Indigenous historical narratives might challenge/upset/redefine how I was taught to teach History implies a critical methodology, since my research question presupposes an interrogation of the colonial power structures through which I was taught to understand

and teach History curriculum. My research approach is inherently political, as I situate myself purposefully in this research to contest long-accepted modes of generating curriculum knowledge in the discipline of History. Thus, as Hatch noted above, I approach this investigation “with the values of the investigator inevitably influencing the inquiry” (2002, p. 16). My research question identifies a perceived injustice, not only the omission of Indigenous historical narratives from the deep history curriculum, but also the distinct, but related, colonial practice of curriculum writers basing constructions of deep history solely on Western positivist notions of knowledge construction. Approaching the museum research while attending to issues of power, injustice, and researcher-reflexivity provides a strong direction for my research steeped in critical methodology.

### **Decolonizing Methodology/Methods**

Western research paradigms like critical theory are distinct from Indigenous paradigms (Kovach, 2010a, p. 40, 2010b, p. 21, Wilson, 2008, p. 38). However, many Indigenous scholars have noted that critical approaches can be “allies” of Indigenous researchers. For example, Kovach (2005) notes that:

[Indigenous researchers] have a natural allegiance with emancipatory research approaches...Emancipatory research is inclusive of a variety of research methodologies...[for example] feminism,...critical theory, all of which share an emancipatory objective...emancipatory research seeks to counter the epistemic privilege of the scientific paradigm...(pp. 20-21)

Kovach’s above point, as I understand it, is that although the critical paradigm is rooted in Western origins, it nonetheless shares some beliefs with Indigenous paradigms about how knowledge is situated and generated. However, I do not presume to employ Indigenous methodologies, being a non-Indigenous researcher, but am instead informed

by Indigenous methodologies. Kovach articulates an “allegiance” between Indigenous paradigms and some Western paradigms like critical theory, which helps to situate my research methodology. Kovach articulates a similar alliance between Indigenous and Western methods, like decolonizing methods:

In conceptualizing a tribal methodology, I have identified a theoretical positioning as having its basis in critical theory with a decolonizing aim in that there is a commitment to praxis and social justice for Indigenous people. As long as decolonization is a purpose of Indigenous education and research, critical theory will be an allied Western conceptual tool for creating change (2010b, p. 47-48)...the decolonizing discourse is one with which both cultures are familiar. It is here that we are able to access some of the strongest allied theoretical critiques. Non-Indigenous critical theorists are strong allies for Indigenous methodologies. (2010b, p. 86)

Kovach’s placement of critical theory with decolonizing methods here effectively describes the position from which I approach my research. Within the critical paradigm, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers can utilize decolonizing methods, and my research project draws on these methods to attend to my research questions. Dion, with Johnston and Rice, define the decolonizing methods they used in their Report on the Urban Aboriginal Education Pilot Project (2010). I perceive how decolonizing methods can stem from critical theory in their statement that “...the concept of “decolonizing” we employ refers to the project of critiquing western worldviews and challenging oppressive power structures that they uphold” (p. 12). The steps of my research methods (elaborated on below) can be said to be decolonizing, in part, because they:

- 1) centre Indigenous narratives over Western/settler narratives of deep history,
- 2) emphasize the deep history of Indigenous Peoples, a condition Linda Tuhiwai Smith suggests is necessary in considering Indigenous discourses (2012, p. 25),
- 3) align with the contentions of many Indigenous researchers who oppose the use of

postmodern concepts like “postcolonial” in historical narratives, stressing that colonialism is ongoing, and

4) acknowledge the profound significance that the role of storying and storytelling has in many Indigenous societies, and contests the Western proclivity to severely differentiate between Indigenous historical storying and Western written historical records. A brief explanation of these foci elucidates the decolonizing perspective I take in my research.

Centring Indigenous narratives of history over settler-constructed narratives is perhaps the most significant of the above foci in terms of decolonizing methods. Battiste (2013) provides further support for the notion that the narratives of colonial curriculum serve settler agendas and describe Indigenous culture-histories in terms of Euro-Canadian value systems:

The modern educational system was created to maintain the identity, language, and culture of a colonial society, while ignoring the need to decolonize. Culture in this educative context is a mask for evolutionary or racial logic. Its theory is derived from a biased position...Most often, Indigenous people...have been depicted as members of a “timeless traditional culture”: a harmonious, internally homogeneous, unchanging culture. From such a perspective, the Indigenous cultures appear to “need” progress, an economic and moral uplifting to enable their capacities. (pp. 30-31)

From Battiste’s above assertion, I draw an example from the Ontario history curriculum based on the findings of positivist Archaeology. In my teaching experience, History curriculum resources that attend to Indigenous history before 1492 invariably portray a variety of Indigenous cultures primarily as they were at the time of contact. The few times that resource-writers do treat with long term history, it is to focus on the “evolution” of stone tools from the so-called “Paleo-Indian” spear points of 10-15 000 years ago, to the “Archaic” points of 3-10 000 years ago, and to the subsequent



“Woodland” Period, the temporal divisions of which are based on changes in stone tools and pottery (e.g., Brinkley, 2015, Bursey, J., Daechsel, H., Hinshelwood, A., & Murphy, C., 2018, Reed et. al., 2011). Culture-histories taught from this perspective not only cast Indigenous histories through the lens of Western cultural values like “technological evolution,” they also manifest Battiste’s contention that Indigenous cultures “appear to “need” progress” (2013, p. 31). My research questions are specifically designed to contest and decentre the above Western emphases in history curriculum, helping me learn how to better teach the vast scope of Indigenous history on Turtle Island.

The second focus I list above that denotes a decolonizing approach is that of emphasizing the continuous, long-term history of Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island. Many curriculum writers have implicitly subscribed to the myth of *terra nullius* (Bruchac, 2010, p. 366) or, as mentioned above, focussed predominantly on Indigenous histories as “frozen in time” as they were at the moment of contact. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou Māori) (2012) urges that treatment of Indigenous histories attend to their vast scopes when she asserts that “...what is particularly significant in indigenous discourses is that solutions are posed from a combination of the time before, colonized time, and the time before that, pre-colonized time. Decolonization encapsulates *both sets of ideas*” [emphasis added] (p. 25). Following Tuhiwai Smith’s above point, I suggest that, in existing curriculum, historical narratives of “pre-colonized time” are *not* decolonized by virtue of their time period being before Europeans arrived on Turtle Island. I suggest that since contemporary history curriculum writers utilize Western positivist methods from Archaeological science to perpetuate historical narratives of the time before colonization, such narratives are, by that nature, “Western,” even though they

treat with Tuhiwai Smith's "pre-colonized time." Learning from Indigenous experts about how they would teach diverse publics about deep history is part of my research project's decolonizing approach.

The third perspective with which I structure my methods that conforms to a decolonizing approach stresses that colonial processes are consistently operating in the present-tense, and must be continuously mediated in research and teaching. Some Indigenous scholars take issue with postmodern perspectives that relegate colonialism to the past (e.g., L. Simpson, 2011, p. 20). Kovach (2010b), for example, notes that:

Within the academic environment, part of the difficulty lies with a theoretical positioning that, in its very name, obscures historical analysis. For example, critical theorists argue that *postpositivism*, *postmodern*, and *postcolonial* universalize marginalization and work to diffuse sites of contestation. Tuhiwai Smith critiques the 'post' in *postcolonial* and suggests that 'naming the world as "post-colonial" is, from indigenous perspectives, to name colonialism as finished business' (1999, p. 99). (p. 75)

From Kovach and Tuhiwai Smith I learn that the term "postcolonial" falsely implies that researchers can treat with cultural conditions that are somehow outside of, or beyond, a colonial framework. In my research I not only refrain from using the term "postcolonial," but my research question implies the ongoing prevalence of colonial narratives in curriculum. Further, in my research methods I ask how my own colonially-derived education affects how I am seeing and understanding museum galleries curated by Indigenous experts.

### **Story as Methodology**

Indigenous-curated museum exhibits include historical narratives that can take the form of stories. As such, attending to the significance of storytelling to Indigenous ways

of historical-knowing comprises part of my methodology. The hi/story narrated in curated galleries and the written descriptions accompanying objects naturally constitute a separate method of storying from Indigenous oral traditions. Kimberly Blaeser (White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa) (1999) notes how Indigenous storytellers have maintained some of the elements of storytelling in written works:

The events of oral tradition, the occurrences, the comings into being, the community of story, these are the elements of tribal telling that many Native authours attempt to incorporate into their written works...Most scholars agree that the oral can never be fully expressed in the written...Native language, and Native culture ultimately cannot be translated. While conceding these points, Native authours still believe in the importance of the attempt and in the possibilities for bringing the text to life. (p. 56)

To Blaeser's above contention about written works, I would add that Indigenous educators in galleries extend their storytelling medium to include the significant objects they purposefully arrange and describe, not only to narrate a historical story, but to "bring [their] text[s] to life." As a history teacher/researcher, I position myself as an active listener to the stories that are told in galleries through the arrangements of culturally significant objects and their associated descriptions. As Kovach (2010b) asserts, "story as methodology is decolonizing research (p. 103)...Stories are who we are. They are both method and meaning. Stories spring forth from a holistic epistemology and are the relational glue in a socially interdependent knowledge system" (p. 108). Significant to my research here is that Kovach establishes that storytelling (by Indigenous experts), historical research, and epistemology/ways of knowing are indivisible facets of a holistic approach to understanding Indigenous historical narratives.

Storytelling serves many purposes in Indigenous societies, depending on the story being told, the storyteller/audience, and the social context. For the purposes of my

research, historical stories told by educators provide both *context* of my research in galleries (i.e., a component of the methodologies used by the educators themselves), and *content*, which includes the explanations and significance of the historical objects in the galleries. Qwul'sih'yah'maht Robina Thomas (Coast Salish) (2005) alludes to the ways that storytelling is integrated with historical ways of knowing when she states that "Storytelling provides an opportunity for First Nations to have their histories documented and included in the written records. In other words, storytelling revises history by naming and including their [Indigenous storytellers'] experience" (p. 244). From Thomas, I learn that storytelling influences "written records," and here I would include the written (and visual) records of objects and their descriptors in museum galleries. Thomas also speaks to the role of storytelling as a history-teaching approach, noting that:

Storytelling traditionally was, and still is, a teaching tool. As such, the stories that are told in research too will be teaching tools. Sharing stories validates the various experiences of the storytellers, but also has the ability to give others with similar stories the strength, encouragement, and support they need to tell their stories. (2005, p. 252)

In the context of Thomas' above quote, historical narratives articulated by Indigenous educators not only teach diverse publics about Indigenous history, they serve as hallmarks of how Indigenous storytelling is a method that counters/corrects/helps decolonize Western historical narratives of the deep-history of Turtle Island, such as those featured in history curriculum. Leanne Simpson (2011) elaborates on the decolonizing nature of Anishinaabe storytelling:

Storytelling is at its core decolonizing, because it is a process of remembering, visioning and creating a just reality where Nishnaabeg live as both *Nishnaabeg* and *peoples*. Storytelling then becomes a lens through which we can envision our way out of cognitive imperialism, where we can create models and mirrors where none existed, and where we can experience the spaces of freedom and justice. (p. 33)

Thomas' and Simpson's assertions are significant for my methods as I strive to become an active listener/reader in Anishinaabe-curated galleries centering stories-as-historical-narration. Educator-storytellers articulate their visions of "way[s] out of cognitive imperialism" (2011, p. 33), and learning from their stories help me answer my research questions and understand how to teach Indigenous history that de-centres Western imperialistic narratives.

Another way my research methodology contests the Western proclivity to undermine Indigenous notions of storytelling is to follow Thomas' (2005) assertion that Indigenous historical stories be conceptualized as primary sources as legitimate as the Western stories that happened to be written down:

All major events that took place in our community were documented. However, "documentation" in traditional research arenas seems to refer only to the written. I am suggesting that the level of complexity and sophistication in which major events were witnessed in our communities demands that these oral histories and stories be reconceptualized and viewed as primary sources. (p. 244)

Learning from Thomas, I also acknowledge in my methodology that the historical narratives told by educators are based on primary sources.

To learn about Anishinaabe historical narratives from Indigenous educators in museum contexts, it is necessary to understand the different kinds of stories that educators draw from to articulate historical narratives. Several Indigenous scholars have described the different kinds of narratives that are usually told by Indigenous storytellers (Doerfler, Sinclair, and Kiiwetinepinesiik, 2013, pp. xvii-xviii, Kovach 2010b, p. 95, Simpson and Maniowabi, 2013, p. 280, Wilson, 2008, p. 98). Kovach (2010b) points out that "Within Indigenous epistemologies, there are two general forms of stories. There are

stories that hold mythical elements, such as creation and teaching stories, and there are personal narratives of place, happenings, and experiences...” (p. 95). Understanding these two categories of stories is important as I learn from Indigenous educators because educators may draw on both types to describe the historical significance of objects, as they deem appropriate for sharing with diverse publics.<sup>22</sup> Doerfler, Sinclair, and Kiiwetinepinesiik (2013) elaborate on the different kinds of stories:

In Anishinaabemowin, two words are predominantly used to describe, and sometimes classify, narrative. *Aadizookaanag* are...“traditional” or “sacred” narratives that embody values, philosophies, and laws important to life. They are also *manidoog* (manitous), living beings who work with Anishinaabeg in the interests of demonstrating principles necessary for *mino-bimaadiziwin*, that good and beautiful life. These stories are most often classified as animate in Anishinaabemowin. *Dibaajimowinan*, another word used to describe narratives, is...to mean “histories” and “news.” They range in time from long ago to today, and often tell of family genealogies, geographies, and historical experiences. They are often classified as inanimate in Anishinaabemowin. There are, of course, exceptions in both cases and many blurry lines in these groupings. (pp. xvii-xviii)

Understanding the different kinds of stories alluded to above helps me to learn about the ways in which educators who, using significant objects, may draw on both *Aadizookaanag* and *Dibaajimowinan*, as they deem appropriate to situate historical narratives for educational purposes.

Because my methodology attends to Indigenous storytelling in museum contexts as ways of historical knowing, it is necessary to understand how Western concepts of story

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<sup>22</sup> Leanne Simpson (2011) discusses a precedent in which sharing some *Aadizookaanag*, or traditional stories, with diverse publics can sometimes be acceptable. In discussing traditional creation stories, she notes that “It is not ethically appropriate for me to tell these stories here, since these stories are traditionally told by Elders who carry these responsibilities during ceremony or under certain circumstances. They are not widely shared. However, sketches of these stories have been printed by some of those Elders themselves. Relying on these published version and versions I have heard told in workshops and...conferences (so in public *not* ceremonial contexts), I wish to bring attention to four tenets of the story...” (p. 35). Following Simpson’s conditional use of stories that are published with permission for the purpose of sharing, I relegate my interactions with stories to those narrated in galleries for public audiences.

are distinct from Indigenous concepts, and how the Western Archaeology curriculum that I seek to contest situates oral traditions and stories. In my own colonial education, I have noted that Western approaches to storytelling draw a stark line between “story” and History. The two terms are not equated in the colonial curriculum. History is often given the weight of “truth” while stories, specifically oral traditions, are often relegated to the realm of “myth,” since they traditionally were not written down. This demonstrates a Western bias that presupposes that the written word is more trustworthy than oral histories. Thomas (2005) questions the validity of this bias when she asks “Storytelling is often deemed illegitimate because it is subjective and therefore biased...Why is it that our...means of recording histories-by oral tradition-must be validated by a more “legitimate” research methodology?” (p. 243). Kovach (2010b) echoes Thomas’ point, noting that “The underlying assumption is that oral tradition is of pre-literate tribal groups that no longer has the same application in a literate and technological world” (p. 96). In my methodology, I follow Thomas and Kovach in presupposing that historical stories told by Indigenous educators, museum contexts are more valid than the historical writings of Western authors when learning about Indigenous history. Given the extremely important nature and function of stories and storying-as-history among Indigenous communities, to perpetuate the Western proclivity of distinguishing between Indigenous stories and Indigenous History in Ontario’s curriculum assumes a degree of untruth or unreliability to Indigenous stories and exemplifies one of the many sites of colonial violence. For example, in the undergraduate Archaeology textbook I read in my second-year Archaeology course, eminent archaeologists Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn (1991), show a picture of a culturally significant object from India, depicting part of the *Ramayana*.

They caution that:

...as always with oral tradition-the difficulty comes in disentangling history from myth...as with so much oral tradition, the problem is actually to demonstrate to which period they refer-to judge how much is ancient and how much reflects a much more recent world. (pp. 165-166)

I note here that the authors legitimize their position as arbiters or judges of what constitutes the difference between “history” and “myth.” They also locate the relevance and lessons that can be learned from oral traditions in temporal classifications, time periods and cultural chronology. This Western focus on temporality and timelines is dramatically different from what Indigenous scholars can teach/learn from oral traditions. The Western perspective exemplified by Renfrew and Bahn above, which implies a binary between storytelling and “truth” in history, also implies that stories can or should be “mined” for information that the researcher deems important. Thomas (2005) effectively upends the researcher-centric perspective of storytelling when she notes that “Storytelling uncovers new ways of knowing...This is not about studying that which the researcher deems important, but being open to hear what the storytellers deem as important about their experience” (p. 245). Following Thomas, my research methodology is designed to challenge me to listen to what the educators deem important, rather than to attempt to “mine” their narratives for themes that I deem important. Kovach (2010b) also attacks the Western preoccupation with assigning themes in Indigenous storytelling to particular points on a linear timeline. She cites McLeod (2007) when teaching us that:

The interrelationship between story and knowing cannot be traced back to any specific starting time within tribal societies, for they have been tightly bound since time immemorial as a legitimate form of understanding (pp. 94-95)...it is the nature and structure of story that causes difficulties for non-tribal systems due to its divergence from the temporal narrative structure of Western culture. For tribal stories are not meant to be oriented within the linearity of time, but rather they transcend time and fasten



themselves to places (McLeod, 2007). (pp. 95-96)

From Kovach, I learn that many stories can be place-based rather than time-based. The colonial history curriculum is usually arranged in linear timelines (e.g., “World History to the End of the Fifteenth Century” (CHW3M1), *The West and the World, 1500-the present* (CHY4U1)) (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015). Learning from experts in Indigenous research methodologies like Kovach and Thomas, one of my tasks in my own methodology is to pay attention to the place-based vs. temporal nature of stories told in curated galleries. Rather than arranging themes and topics that conform to “the linearity of time,” as many Western curators do, I ask how Indigenous educators might instead emphasize the importance of Place rather than timelines when storying with significant objects for diverse publics.

Preoccupation with a chronological ordering of historical narrative is not the only challenge inherent in colonial curriculum. Another tendency in curriculum that is distinct from Indigenous storying as a way of historical knowing is the tendency of curriculum writers to homogenize distinct Indigenous cultures. In conceptualizing my methodological approach in which I learn from educator’s stories, I draw on the work of Thomas King (Cherokee) (2003, 2012). King wisely stated that “the truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (2003, pp. 2, 32, 62, 92, 122). In light of this, King went further in his later research and commented on the nature of how stories are constructed about Indigenous deep history, hinting at the homogenizing subtext often assumed in history school curriculum that equates hundreds of different Indigenous cultures:

The sad truth is that, within the public sphere...most of the history of Indians in North America has been forgotten, and what we are left with is a series of historical artifacts...Native history is somewhat akin to a fossil hunt in which we find a skull in Almo, Idaho, a thigh bone on the Montana

plains, a tooth near the site of Powhatan's village in Virginia, and then, assuming that all the parts are from the same animal, we guess at the size and shape of the beast. (2012, p. 20)

King's above allusion to Indigenous history being akin to a "fossil hunt" better enables me to identify the ways that History curriculum also tends to homogenize Indigenous cultures. King's work teaches me how centering Indigenous stories in curriculum might allow me to understand more about what is currently missing in the historical narrative usually taught in schools. To what extent might Indigenous museum educators use stories to teach about deep history from culturally significant objects? How might the stories told in public museum contexts that challenge Western concepts of Land, place, and time enable teachers like myself to centre Indigenous narratives in curriculum? My research, guided by Thomas', Kovach's, Simpson's, and King's directives to attend to story explores these questions.

Respecting the fact that Indigenous museum educators have shared narratives with public audiences, and that this researcher is a guest, a listener, situated in his own location vis-à-vis the research project (see above), it is appropriate to situate this project as co-constructivist as well as critical in methodological orientation. Many Indigenous scholars have suggested that a co-constructivist approach to knowledge exploration is respectful of Indigenous ways of knowing, and is why Wilson (2008) asserts that "...once we get away from the idea that knowledge is individually owned, collaboration in the interpretation of knowledge becomes not only feasible but also desired or necessary" (p. 121). Through a critical/co-constructivist methodology, the findings of this research project lead me to better understand Indigenous perspectives on culturally significant objects as sites of learning in ethical ways, and how Indigenous narratives incorporating

objects instruct educators to be aware of what has been missing from secondary History curriculum.

Scholars have written widely on Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies, and how they are distinct from their Western counterparts, and these experts inform my own research methodology as I investigate Indigenous museum exhibits. It is important to re-iterate that because I do not self-identify as an Indigenous person, I do not presume to employ traditional Indigenous methodologies in my research. Rather, informed by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, I define research methods that are respectful of traditional methodologies (see below).

### **Indigenous Methodologies in Museums**

Indigenous scholars whose work defines tribal epistemologies and methodologies include Dion (see above), Margaret Kovach (Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux) (2005, 2010a, 2010b, & Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012)), and Shawn Wilson (2008), Absolon, (2011). For example, Kovach (2010a) states:

When using the term ‘paradigmatic approach’ in...Indigenous methodologies, this means that this particular research approach flows from an Indigenous belief system that has at its core a relational understanding and accountability to the world...While certain western research paradigms frown upon the relational because of its potential to bias research, Indigenous methodologies embrace relational assumptions as central to their core epistemologies. (p. 42)

Indigenous educators who have authored educational galleries for the public have drawn on their own relationships with culturally significant objects, using tribal epistemologies. Exploring the question of how Indigenous educators use traditional research methods to inform the public’s understanding of deep history via the study of culturally significant objects fills a current need in the scholarly literature. This need is just as critical for

Ontario's K-12 history curriculum, where such considerations are notably absent.

### **Métissage and Critical Self-reflexivity**

How then might Indigenous perspectives in interpreting culturally significant objects be envisioned for Ontario's curriculum considering that colonial, Western perspectives are predominantly expressed in schools? One approach that aids in my research that maintains the distinct nature of Indigenous ways of knowing within a relational and co-operative context with Western systems is Donald's metaphor of the braid, which he sees as an example of Indigenous Métissage, described above. The metaphor of the braid, as imagined by Donald (2009a, 2009b, 2012) is informative in developing questions for research and in co-constructing knowledge with the stories and exhibits of Indigenous museum educators in this project. Donald (2009a, 2012) emphasizes the metaphor of the braid as containing separate, isolated perspectives (non-hybrid), yet that are in-relation. He defines Métissage as:

a research sensibility that mixes and purposefully juxtaposes diverse forms of texts as a way to reveal that multiple sources and perspectives influence experiences... Métissage...is about relationality and the desire to treat texts-and lives-as relational and braided rather than isolated and independent. (2012, p. 537)

Donald's above iteration of Métissage powerfully influences my own methodological perspective because it reinforces the notion that Indigenous and Western approaches, while they may respectfully work together, remain independent and distinct. Examining how Indigenous educators teach with culturally significant objects as a means to narrate deep history in public contexts can invite a multivocal approach at all levels of research, taking care to avoid hybridizing Indigenous perspectives or having them relegated to "quaint folk knowledge" (Atalay, 2012, p. 77). It can also lead teachers like myself to

confront how the complex dynamics of power-relationships that lead to the production of colonial curriculum resources might be challenged and interrupted to centre Indigenous narratives when teaching history.

### **Recognizing the Legitimacy of Indigenous Knowledge**

I attend to the ways that Indigenous educators teach from Indigenous paradigms and beliefs about the nature of knowledge. Many Indigenous researchers explicitly reject positivist notions of an objective reality (e.g., Atalay, 2012, p. 83, Dion, 2009, p. 17, Wilson, 2008, p. 56), and instead approach research paradigms and methodologies assuming that a powerful *relationality* exists among all things that Western researchers would classify as both animate and inanimate. I similarly approach my research respectful of this perspective. Wilson cites another Indigenous scholar, Eber Hampton, who asserts that “Emotionless, passionless, abstract, intellectual research is a...lie, it does not exist...Humans-feeling, living, breathing, thinking humans-do research. When we try to cut ourselves off at the neck and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous...” (2008, p. 56). Similarly, Kovach suggests that “Indigenous research frameworks ask for clarity of both the academic and personal purpose, and it is the purpose statement within Indigenous research that asks: What is your purpose for this research?” (2010b, pp. 114-115). While the emphasis that Wilson and Kovach place on the relationship of the researcher to the research itself invites a methodological discussion, it also supports the holistic notion shared by many Indigenous researchers that the various components of research are subtly connected in a relational web and cannot be succinctly categorized into discrete concepts, bins, or categories (Atalay 2008a, p. 33, Battiste, 2013, p. 160, Kovach, 2010b, pp. 34, 122, Styres, 2017, p.

86, Wilson, 2008, p. 120). For example, Kovach reminds us that “The isolation of method, methodology, and epistemology from each other suggests that each component can work independently rather than as an interdependent relational research framework” (2010b, p. 122). As such, I draw on this concept to situate my research methodology and paradigm and suggest that my own biases and identity instead play *directive* roles in my research, as they effectively connect me to my method, methodologies, and epistemology, and ultimately to and with my research foci.

## **Methods**

My research methods are crafted to investigate questions including “What are *Indigenous archaeologies* in public/museum contexts, and how can teachers like myself learn from them to teach more ethically about history? In what ways do Indigenous-curated exhibits enable us to learn from archaeological objects and sites? How are these similar to, and distinct from, colonial Western perspectives? How can Indigenous narratives of deep history be integrated into the dominant, colonial education system?” To explore these research questions and others like them, I incorporate a blend of research methods that are designed to centre Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies vis-à-vis learning from culturally significant objects.

During the planning of this research, the idea of interviewing the Indigenous educators who narrated the museum galleries was considered. However, scholars such as Eve Tuck and others (Mawhinney, 1998, Tuck and Yang, 2012, Tuck, McKenzie and McCoy, 2016) strongly caution against settler researchers approaching discussions with Indigenous Peoples from a position that implies, “You [Indigenous Peoples] are the experts, you should tell us what we should do...” (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 10). In this approach, the

settler researcher risks making a *settler move to innocence*, in which responsibility for engaging in the difficult work of unlearning the implications of our colonial education is deflected from the settler researcher, onto Indigenous Peoples. As I suggest in the concluding chapter of this dissertation, it is the responsibility of settler teachers to unlearn colonial lessons such as the myth of objectivity in Archaeological scientific narratives (see Chapter Six).

To investigate the research questions, I rely on intensity sampling to define a group of museum exhibits from four museums, two national and two local. The exhibits are curated by Indigenous experts. The research questions (see below) are aimed at investigating how Indigenous histories and cultures are represented, and what similarities/differences I might notice between what Indigenous educators are doing, and what we as secondary school teachers do when teaching history curriculum. Through my research questions, I seek to:

- a) consider how material culture/culturally significant objects can be interpreted as sites of learning for public audiences using tribal epistemologies,<sup>23</sup>
- b) consider how deep history can be respectfully presented in schools based on Indigenous interpretations of material culture.

Swaminathan and Mulvihill suggest that intensity sampling “typically comprises small sample sizes. For example a small group is interviewed several times to get in-depth information and stories” (2017, p. 38). Here I note the particularly extractive presupposition of this definition and instead position this sampling approach as relational.

For example, Dion (2009) utilized a sample size of 2-3 classroom teachers for the

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<sup>23</sup> Here, it is important to note that I (the researcher) do not use or draw on tribal epistemologies since I do not identify as an Indigenous person. Indigenous curators who have developed galleries studied in this research may draw on their own tribal epistemologies, where appropriate, to educate diverse publics.

Braiding Histories project, selected in part because they:

...demonstrated an interest in investigating and making changes to current approaches to teaching Aboriginal subject material. I felt it was important to work with teachers who recognized an existing problem with the ways of teaching about Aboriginal people and who were concerned with accomplishing change. (p. 86)

This approach supports what Kovach suggests is appropriate to Indigenous research methods,

In choosing participants, it is suggested within qualitative studies that research participants be chosen for what they can bring to the study as opposed to random sampling...Having a pre-existing and ongoing relationship with participants is an accepted characteristic of research according to tribal paradigms. (2010b, p. 51)

Respectful of the importance of Kovach's assertion that participants be "chosen for what they can bring to the study as opposed to random sampling" (2010b, p. 51), I have chosen the four museums for my project specifically because they feature Indigenous experts associated with particular (predominantly Anishinaabe) communities.

### **Use of Indigenous Protocols**

I do not hold discussions with Indigenous museum educators or archivists about the content of their public galleries used in this research. However, I follow Debby Wilson and Jean-Paul Restoule (2010) and offer sacred tobacco at the museum sites, planting it/offering it to the Earth prior to entering the museums. Wilson and Restoule contend that offering tobacco in itself is a research methodology (p. 33), and that this sacred act situates the researcher and the subject in a relationship of respect and reciprocity. "Indigenous research methodologies are founded on relationships, which must, in turn, be based on respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility" (p. 32). Tobacco is placed in front of an Indigenous expert or Knowledge-Keeper when a request is made for



knowledge-sharing.

### **Research Sites**

The two national/provincial museums I study include the two locations of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. and New York City, and the Canadian Museum of History in Hull, Quebec (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization). Local museums include The Museum of Ojibwa Culture (St. Ignace, Michigan) and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation at M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin Island. I visited each museum twice, conducting a focused research study and engagement with their exhibits. Some of the supporting research questions I asked during these visits included:

- 1) How are Indigenous people, history and cultures represented? What differences, similarities do I notice between what museums are doing and what we as secondary school educators do when teaching Indigenous content.
- 2) How are museums acknowledging their sources? Whose voices are represented in the exhibits?
- 3) Considering the propensity to represent Indigenous people as “Romantic, Mythical Others” as exotic primitive people of the past, how are museums countering this representation?
- 4) As an experienced secondary school history/archaeology teacher, what do I observe is different/the same about the representation of Indigenous people, histories, and cultures?
- 5) What do I appreciate about the representations I encounter, and what continues to trouble me?

- 6) What is the pedagogy of the museum? Do I recognize the use of what I would identify as Indigenous pedagogical practices?
- 7) What are some of the ways that Indigenous (Anishinaabe) educators arrange objects in galleries? How is space used to iterate conceptions of history?
- 8) What are some of the specific kinds of artifacts that are used in composing the exhibits?

### **Thematic Analysis**

After the museum visits, I conducted a thematic analysis of the information I collected. I discerned how my learning in the field research led me to understand how I could address the initial problems I identified (above), and postulate ways in which my teaching of the school curriculum and its accompanying resources could be re-thought in light of what I learned about how Indigenous educators and archivists centre Indigenous knowledges in teaching history. These questions are outlined in Appendix A.

After conducting this museum field research, I analysed my learning for overall connecting themes, messages, similarities and implications. These results suggested new directions I should take when teaching deep history. The results also suggested how teachers in general might meet the needs of, or might suggest that we redefine, these course expectations to better conform to initiatives such as the TRC Calls to Action and the goals of the UNDRIP. In a broad sense, this approach utilizes a thematic analysis. Riessman articulates the utility of thematic approaches when she states “...the thematic approach is suited to a wide range of narrative texts; thematic analysis can be applied to stories that develop in interview conversations and group meetings, and those found in

written documents” (2008, p. 54). Several Indigenous scholars have made use of thematic analysis or a similar approach in their research. Dion, for example, assessed how the participants in her research struggled with teaching the Braiding Histories stories, noticing that they approached teaching the stories through a modifying lens of concern about how the content might challenge established social beliefs. She noted that “[participants]...wrestled with issues that their scaffolding did not support” (2009, p. 101), and that for the teachers, “...devoting time to hearing and responding to Aboriginal voices was widely perceived as interfering with the “legitimate curriculum” (2009, pp. 101-102). Thematic analysis was also implemented by Kovach, who stated “I used mixed methods to ensure that a story was available for interpretive analysis by others...the thematic grouping section of my research is often referred to as ‘the findings’” (2010b, p. 132). Kovach (2010a) conducted two research experiments using the Indigenous conversational method, followed by a Western thematic analysis linking pertinent ideas and themes from the two studies, which she found “allow[s] for a succinct (though non-contextual) analysis of findings” (p. 46). Swaminathan and Mulvihill (2017) offer examples of questions that are useful in a thematic approach, including “1. What are the themes of the stories participants [or educators] narrate? 2. How are the stories related to each other?” (p. 67). I used these and other questions to examine the results of my research in the curated archaeological collections. Research findings identified overall suggestions for curriculum change or classroom resource production that may be future initiatives based on this research. Consequently, if I might improve my teaching of the history curriculum in a way that centres Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, this facet of my teaching may be moved towards Atalay’s assertion that “Research must

be done with...Indigenous communities” (2012, p. 40).

In my museum research, I employ particular terms to describe the diverse Indigenous Peoples who conceptualized, organized, and narrated the museum galleries I visited as a part of my fieldwork. Language is not neutral (Styres, 2019, p. 25), and terminology/words carry their own sets of cultural connotations and legacies. Younging (2018) reminds us that making proper and ethical use of terminology means “declaring your limitations as an arbiter of language: explain the choices and thought that inform the words on the page...” (p. 50). To that effect, where possible, I refer to the people who organized the materials in each museum by the terms that the museums themselves have specified, in consultation with the Indigenous organizers of the galleries. The Canadian Museum of History has placed a plaque at the entrance of the First Peoples Hall, naming the organizers of the galleries within, and uses the phrase, “Elders and scholars.” The National Museum of the American Indian, New York location’s information plaques name the individuals who authored the galleries there, and uses the term, “historians and scholars.”

In my use of terminology, however, I wish to make an exception concerning the term “curator.” The term “curator” is associated with Western museums, which have long histories of appropriating often-stolen Indigenous objects and presenting them to the public in ways that serve colonial goals (see Willinsky, 1998, p. 64, and Atalay, 2012, p. 8). Thus, even though some of the museums I visited use the term “curator,” as a non-Indigenous researcher, I refrain from using that term, having learned something about the deeper colonial implications that the term connotes. The National Museum of the American Indian, Washington D.C. location, has placed information poster-plaques on

the walls of its galleries naming the Indigenous Peoples who organized the galleries and refers to them as “community-curators” (NMAI). Similarly, the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation refers to the organizers of their galleries as “curatorial staff” (OCF). When referring to the Indigenous organizers who arranged the galleries at the NMAI, Washington, and at the OCF, and when referring to the authours of all the galleries I visit collectively, I substitute the term, “curator” with “educator.” The word “educator” is a broad term that may include people from diverse occupations that may be in positions to instruct or educate others. While the term “teacher” can presuppose a person, of any background, to be a member of the Ontario College of Teachers who teaches in a K-12 school in Ontario, The term “educator” is wider, encompassing a plurality of teaching and learning styles, places, purposes, and audiences. Khodamoradi and Maghsoudi contrast the ideas of “teacher” (here referred to as a “novice” teacher, and “educator” (in the quote referred to as an “expert” teacher but described under the heading of “educator” in their 2019 article) and suggest that:

A novice teacher selects information and knowledge (content knowledge) and tries to transmit the given content to learners mind...But an expert teacher [educator] broadens the spectrum and includes those content types which entail higher-order thinking...and tries to empower learners and equip them with tools to reflect upon their ideologies in order to help them live a quality life. (2019, p. 24)

The Indigenous Elders, historians, scholars, and others who organized the museums I visited come from different cultures, territories, and occupations, but, through their efforts at those museums, they have all worked to educate those who visit their galleries.

In a similar way, I sometimes refer to myself as a “learner” in the context of my fieldwork in the museums, but more consistently I use the term, “guest.” I situate myself as a learner in the galleries, eager to learn about the ways in which Indigenous educators

use objects and museum spaces to teach Indigenous (hi)stories. However, the term “guest” better reflects my intentions in the museums as a part of a learning relationship. The term “guest” can imply that the self is “not home,” but is in the place/home or location of another. This can entail a duty of responsibility and respect that may not be as implicit in the term “learner.” In the galleries, I consider that I have a duty of responsibility and respect that asks for a similar level of comportment and open-mindedness that one should display when in the home of others.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Historical Chronologies vs. Place-Based History Teaching

In this chapter, I show how at the CMH, the OCF, the NMAI, and the MOC, Indigenous museum educators prioritize historical narratives that connect history and culture to the Lands and Places in which those histories unfold(ed). I further aim to unfold the significance of this focus for thinking differently about History curriculum. In the context of my research, I follow Styres (2019) use of the term Place, “Space...is an empty generality...By inhabiting spaces—by being present in those spaces, to occupy those spaces, to story those spaces, to (re)member and (re)cognize those spaces—they become *placeful*” (p. 27, emphasis in original). Therefore, my use of the term Place refers in part to territories in which Indigenous Peoples live(d) in the past and the present, including all the interacting facets of those Lands, for example waters, soils, plants and animals.

My chapter engages this contrast between historical-chronological approaches to organizing historical narratives favoured by Western museums and Place-based approaches to build a critical framework that challenges long-used colonial practices, epistemologies and narratives in both museums and history curriculum resources (e.g., for some examples of the Western tendency to prioritize chronological sequencing in historical narratives secondary school history courses, see Appendix B). However, historical-chronological and Place-based approaches are not natural binaries on a continuum, nor is it my intention to position them as such. The distinction is, however, useful for re-evaluating how history may be both learned and taught. It is this distinction, among others, that influenced my learning in the museum fieldwork and that I examine in detail in the pages to follow. As I will suggest, one of the most significant lessons that I

learned from the organization of these galleries is that their organizers situate people's relationships to Places as the most overwhelmingly significant priority in teaching Indigenous cultures and histories to the public.

Upon entering the Canadian Museum of History (CMH), the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation's museum (OCF), and the NMAI, Washington, it became immediately evident that the designers of the museums wanted to anchor the buildings and their contents strongly to the outdoors, and to the particular places the buildings inhabit. Although the First Peoples Hall in the CMH occupies the first floor of the building and has several other floors atop it, the Hall designers have artfully crafted the likeness of a blue sky which sweeps across the ceiling, giving the visitor the sense of being outside. Similarly, the museum in the OCF is divided into different rooms, each one opening onto a central rotunda which has glass skylight windows that let the natural light into the building.

The connection of the museums to the outside places they inhabit is a theme that impacted my experiences in the galleries. Strong connections to the Places in which the culturally significant objects were made, and the relationships of their makers to the Places they exist(ed) in, became a lens through which I could come to understand the lessons the museum educators are teaching. This lens stands in contrast to many museums which are organized according to Western knowledge frameworks. Museums curated by Western authorities tend to organize their collections along historical-chronological timelines. For example, a visitor moving through the Egyptian gallery at the Royal Ontario Museum first encounters the museum's collection of "Old Kingdom" objects, then moves on to the "Middle Kingdom" collection, and finally to the "New



Kingdom” collection. These collections are arranged in a linear, temporal sequence from oldest to newest. At the CMH, OCF, and the NMAI, however, educators disrupt the Western proclivity to base historical narratives on temporally defined chronologies.

### **Place/Land-Based Emphasis in the Canadian Museum of History (CMH)**

To situate my learning, I begin with an example of the historical-chronological approach prioritized by many History curriculum writers. Brinkley, for example, in an Advanced Placement American History textbook, asserts that,

For many decades, scholars believed that all early migrations into the Americas came from humans crossing an ancient land bridge over the Bering Strait into what is now Alaska...The migrations were probably the result of the development of new stone tools- ... Later in the Archaic period, population groups also began to develop new tools to perform work. Among them were nets and hooks for fishing, traps for smaller animals, and baskets for gathering berries, nuts, seeds, and other plants. (2015, pp. 2-3)

First, I note here that Indigenous history is presented primarily from a historical-chronological lens and in terms of events that Western historians define as noteworthy or significant being presented in order-of-time. Second, I note the author’s use of culturally significant objects. Objects such as stone tools, nets, hooks, and traps, are used to situate Indigenous cultures and histories in the linearity of a temporal sequence. Place is utilized only in terms of its utility for locating supposed places of origin. It is through learning from Indigenous educators in museum contexts that a critical examination of the historical-chronological lens can lead history teachers to challenge long-practiced conceptions of how history teaching and learning can be conceptualized.

The First People’s Hall at the CMH is divided up into ten open concept rooms, with five of them devoted to presenting culturally significant objects from specific Indigenous nations/cultures from before European contact. As I moved through the rooms devoted to

histories and cultures dating back to before European contact, I first encountered a collection entitled “Maritime Peoples.” This collection includes a map displaying where various Indigenous nations live along the Atlantic Coast of what is now Canada and the north-eastern United States. It includes a variety of hunting and fishing tools, canoes, clothing, sewing tools, and a reconstructed whale-bone dwelling. While none of the culturally significant objects in this collection are dated, there is a small round table in front of that collection with objects and maps. Entitled, “People in a Changing Landscape,” the table’s maps include “Atlantic Canada 13,000 years ago,” “Atlantic Canada 10,000 years ago,” and “Atlantic Canada 6,000 years ago.” The four objects in glass display cases in the round table include a dolomite stone plummet dated to the “Maritime Archaic,” about 2,000 B.C.E., a “Slate Ulu-like” Knife, Archaic, about 3,000-4,000 B.C.E., a stone “Gouge,” Archaic, about 4,000 B.C.E., and a walrus-ivory “Awl,” before A.D. 1500. The scholars and Elders who arranged this collection provide calendar dates for these objects on the associated information cards, a rarity in the ten open concept rooms housing the collections representing the deep history of Turtle Island. However, even more overtly visible than the information cards are the maps affixed to the “People in a Changing Landscape” round table. These maps show the places in which the makers of the objects on the table lived. It seems to me that the prominent placement of the maps helps to situate these objects primarily in the context of Place rather than in the context of historical-chronology. Indeed, the very title of the round table, “People in a Changing Landscape,” illustrates the relational nature between the objects, their makers, and the Places in which they coexisted over long periods of time. Absent is any mention of the historical development of the objects, or any reference to chronologies or

sequences that explain the development of the particular physical forms of the objects in the case. In this collection, historical dates are used to establish an Indigenous nation's long-term connection to a Place, not to situate it in a linear timeframe.

Moving to the next gathering of objects, I encountered the “Arctic Whalers” collection, followed by the “Communal Hunters” collection,” which features culturally significant objects from the Indigenous nations of the Great Plains. After this, the “People of the Longhouse” collection presents culturally significant objects from Haudenosaunee Peoples of what is now Southern Ontario and New York State. Subsequently, the “Trade Fairs” collection features objects from a hypothetical social and trading gathering between Mandan and Assiniboine peoples of the Great Plains. In each of these collections, the scholars and Elders prioritize people's relationships to Places, superseding an emphasis on a chronological sequence of events. For example, note how the galleries are divided up into history-and-culture-by Place, such as the “Communal Hunters” collection. This collection features objects from a variety of Indigenous nations that exist in-relation-to the Lands they inhabit, such as the Mandan, Sioux, and others. The galleries are not divided up into, or are the objects within them arranged internally, according to earlier-to-later historical chronologies. In fact, no such chronologically dependent history of events seems to exist in these galleries in the CMH. Each collection is titled and organized according to where on Turtle Island peoples and the associated culturally significant objects are located, not according to when or in what order specific events happened.

The Elders and scholars at the CMH centre Place-based histories over historical-chronologies, a practice which stands in stark contrast to the temporally-ordered histories in colonial school curriculum. Earlier, I noted how colonially-trained archaeologists

frequently define and organize Indigenous histories based on changes in Indigenous pottery styles through time (e.g., Brinkley, 2015, Bursey, J., Daechsel, H., Hinshelwood, A., & Murphy, C., 2018, Reed et. al., 2011). In the galleries of the CMH therefore, I noted with interest that the Elders and scholars included a learning centre in the “Peoples of the Longhouse” collection that features Haudenosaunee pottery. I approached the learning centre eager to learn how the Elders and scholars utilized traditional pottery to instruct the museum guest. A brief examination of the ways that archaeologists and, by association, curriculum writers, attend to pottery will serve to situate my learning in the “Peoples of the Longhouse” gallery.

## **Pottery**

For many decades, Western archaeologists have excavated and analyzed fragments of pottery/ceramics, which they have used to substantially contribute to the construction of dominant culture-historical chronologies. One reason for the preponderance of ceramic studies in Archaeology is that pottery is one of the few substances that does not seem to decay in the ground over time. Western archaeologists have sometimes constructed entire culture-histories based solely on perceived changes in a group’s pottery styles over time. For example, Barclay et. al. (2016, preamble) assert that;

Pottery is one of the most common artefacts recovered from archaeological excavations, mainly because it usually does not decay as easily as artefacts made of other materials. Although it is widely regarded as a reliable tool for dating, pottery is significant as evidence for technology, tradition, modes of distribution, patterns of consumption and site formation processes.

Significant here is archaeologists’ assertion that the important features of pottery are in the aspects that are visible to the senses, and therefore conform to the Western scientific understanding of how knowledge is constructed from direct observation of physical

phenomena. Similarly, the Ontario Archaeological Society (OAS) publishes in its Summary of Ontario Archaeology website that;

The Early Woodland period in Ontario is generally recognized as the period when pottery was first introduced. In many ways, however, the basic life styles of the people seems to have remained unchanged from preceding periods with hunting, fishing and gathering being the primary means of subsistence. This period is believed to have lasted from about 800 or 900 B.C. until about 0 B.C. (Bursey, Daechsel, Hinshelwood, and Murphy, 2018)

Except for the introduction of pottery, The OAS asserts that the “basic life styles of the people seems to have remained unchanged from preceding periods...” (Bursey, Daechsel, Hinshelwood, and Murphy, 2018). It is interesting to note that, if people’s lifestyles “remained unchanged,” then the use of pottery is the only benchmark for differentiating the “Early Woodland” period from the preceding “Archaic” period. Such a distinction replicates the Western, colonial practice of constructing historical narratives based primarily on chronological sequences, reducing the significance of material culture to observable stylistic changes in the archaeological record, such as in the significance archaeologists place on ceramics.

Archaeologists’ emphasis on the introduction of pottery as the hallmark of a new chronological era in Indigenous deep history also makes its way into secondary curriculum resources, whose writers follow the lead of archaeologists. For example, John Roberts, in his 2006 textbook *First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples*, cites the Initial Woodland Period as starting around 3,000 years ago, following the period that archaeologists refer to as the Archaic. The first listed criterion in this time period is “Pottery...introduced from the south” (p. 25). He writes that “The Woodland culture was similar to the Archaic culture. However, the Woodland peoples added pottery to their

technologies” (p. 26). The resulting narratives replicated by curriculum authors both organize Indigenous histories according to the historical-chronological models favoured by Western scholars, and privilege Western epistemologies based on culturally significant objects like pottery which is directly observable by the human eye, i.e., the scientific method.

The teachings of the Elders and scholars at the CMH have supported my learning about the importance of pottery among the Haudenosaunee in a very different context than the Western colonial emphasis on using pottery to establish cultural chronologies. In the “Peoples of the Longhouse” Collection, for instance, Elders and scholars have installed a glass case containing 8 examples of pottery from the time before European contact, although no dates are provided for the pots. On a plaque in front of the glass case, museum educators have had inscribed a lesson for visitors about the significance of pottery and pottery-making. It reads, in part;

Pottery: Learning from Our Mothers

Young women and girls learned...pottery making...from their mothers, aunts, grandmothers and other female relatives. Manufacturing techniques and decorative motifs were handed down from generation to generation. The continuity of pottery forms and decorative motifs speaks to the importance that Iroquoian potters gave to pottery making and decoration...the pottery shows the strength of the pupil-teacher relationship, and of the bonds between generations of women. Young girls just learning their craft made small pots. The art of pottery making evidently took some time to master. (Canadian Museum of History)

One significant lesson that museum Elders and scholars teach to the public is the centrality of connections to family relationships and to Place, in contrast with lessons of chronological culture-history. Instead of learning about ceramics to discuss an unfolding of historical events, even when those events are primarily changes in ceramic style, Indigenous museum educators prioritize alternate themes. Historical lessons the Elders

and scholars wish to emphasize make mention first of the relationships between the objects made with clay, and female family members in an inter-generational context, extending back through generations. They accentuate the strength of pupil-teacher relationships and gendered bonds between generations. The pots themselves strongly link the visitor's learning about kinships forged in relationship to the Places in which they develop. The pots are presented as physical manifestations of the interaction between strong family and pedagogical relationships, articulated through the clay of the Land. From the Elders and scholars' learning centre about traditional pottery, I can learn something about how to think about taking a small step towards beginning to decolonize my teaching practice. I can learn what it might mean to challenge, reframe, and/or cease teaching Indigenous deep history primarily by relying on the Western chronological-historical approach. Teaching history lessons that mention pottery could allude instead to the strong relationships that learning to make it helped to reinforce between elder women, younger women, and the Land on which such relationships thrive. This might lead teachers to take a step towards decolonizing history education by having teachers challenge and rethink the colonial power structures that emphasizing pottery-based historical chronologies replicates.

I learned about further challenges to Western approaches to teaching history upon conducting research at the next museum. In the CMH's "People's of the Longhouse" gallery, Elders and scholars contextualized culturally significant objects like pottery through family relationships and those families' connections to the Places in which they live. At the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, I learned about some of the ways in which Anishinaabe museum educators also teach history through family relationships and their

strong connections to Place, this time through the manufacture and exposition of traditional arts like quill work birch bark boxes. The OCF's educators also instruct guests about Anishinaabe People's historical connections to Lands and waters through traditional teachings about manitous associated with Lands and/or waters.

### **Place/Land-Based Emphasis in the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation Museum (OCF)**

As I moved through the museum galleries of the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation in M'Chigeeng, Manitoulin Island, it became starkly apparent that here, like at the CMH, Indigenous educators had arranged the collections of culturally significant objects to reflect a deep and profound relationship to the Places that the objects' makers lived in-relation-with.

### **Quillwork**

The second room in the OCF's museum hall features many examples of Anishinaabe art. Here, three glass cases are stationed along the walls that contain no less than 44 porcupine quillwork birch bark boxes. Text posters over the glass cases teach visitors about how Anishinaabe artists gather and use quills in this style of art. One excerpt from the posters informs visitors that;

The quills of the porcupine are only useful at certain times of the year. They are plucked one by one (very carefully) in the spring, for as the summer progresses they become full of an oily fluid. (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation)

And, of the birch bark,

The birchbark is ready to be harvested when the first strawberry is ripe. It is at this time that the bark peels most easily from the tree. No permanent damage is inflicted on the tree if it is peeled in the proper way. (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation)

In these educational excerpts, Anishinaabe educators are drawing powerful cultural



connections between birch bark trees, strawberries/heartberries, and animals, namely porcupines, whose quills are central to the quillwork box art form. Centring the artists' relationships with the animals, plants, and trees of the Lands on which arts such as birch bark and quillwork boxes are made teaches museum visitors about the strong connection between Anishinaabe artists, and the Places and Lands on which they live.

The iconography on the quillwork birch bark boxes at the OCF carries significant themes that artists express through this medium and that are strongly rooted in the plants and animals that are germane to the Places in which Anishinaabe history and culture thrive. Noticeably absent in the presentation of quillwork boxes is any kind of reference to a chronological order of development or sequencing. Not only are there no dates provided for any of the boxes, neither are they arrayed in a temporally defined framework. Further, in all the information that Anishinaabe artists provided to guests through posters and the collections of boxes themselves, historical dates for the introduction or development of quillwork boxes are similarly absent. The messages emphasized by Anishinaabe artists through the beautiful medium of quillwork boxes teaches museum guests far more about the significance of people's connection to Place rather than a connection to proving/demonstrating a temporal development of cultural expression, what has been referred to as "chronology" in this research.

Proceeding through the OCF museum, visitors next encounter a large glass-faced case running the length of the wall against which it is situated. The case is devoted to the traditional arts created by G'Mewin Fox and her grandmother Maime Migwans. A textual poster about the women adorns the wall inside the case, and the case itself contains four tabletops with a selection of the artists' work (all unlabelled/no date given). The selection

includes birch bark quillwork boxes, a collection of stencils and tools used in the making of quillwork boxes, a jingle dress, a beadwork-decorated leather vest with fringe, leather-handled feather fans with Medicine Wheel motifs, and a birch bark quillwork bolo tie. A second textual poster reinforces the important role that Fox's grandmother Maime Migwans played in her education about the crafting of traditional quillwork boxes;

G'Mewin remembers lying in her grandmother Maime's bed at night, next to her work table, and pretending to be asleep as she watched the master quillworker's hands. Now and then, Maime would pause and turn the quillwork basket without a word, so G'Mewin could see her progress. Basket after basket came into being in the light of the lamp's bare bulb. Individual pieces were sold and traded away for daily essentials, but the spirit always remained in the practice, not the product. The elder's fingers spoke silently to the young artist, and a tradition of life-giving arts passed from hand to hand. (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation)

This passage highlights the significance that the artists place on what the poster calls *practice* over *product* when it comes to culturally significant objects. By contrast, archaeological chronologies that curriculum writers use to teach historical narratives rarely emphasize the practice of how culturally significant objects were made. Even when Western archaeologists consider the processes of object-making, these are not akin to the ways in which Anishinaabe artists like G'Mewin Fox consider "the practice" of creating objects of traditional arts. Western archaeologists often answer questions of how objects were made by identifying the society's technological abilities and practices. For example, in Renfrew and Bahn's introductory Archaeology textbook, a chapter is devoted to "How Did They Make and Use Tools? Technology" (1991, pp. 271-306). Samples of subtopics in the chapter focus on resource extraction (p. 273), microwear analysis (p. 291), and metal alloying and casting (p. 299). At the OCF by contrast, the educators locate the significance of "the practice" of the production of the objects in a relational context

between grandmother and granddaughter. In the information shared with the museum guest, “The elder’s fingers spoke silently to the young artist” (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation) rather than to notions of the technological ability of the craftspeople or society in general. Rather than conflate Western and Anishnaabe practices, the museum situates culturally significant objects as sites of learning in ways that productively challenge the tendency of Western archaeologists to centre “the product” over “the practice.” In my experience, history curriculum-resources emphasize the physical characteristics of objects that construct historical cultural-chronologies and other, more directly scientifically observable relationships. In this way, for Western archaeologists, and subsequently for generations of curriculum writers, the spirit always remained primarily in the product, not the practice. Thus, learning from Anishinaabe educators in museums can help us to interrogate and challenge the assumptions and educational power structures upon which settler-history teachers have drawn to teach historical narratives. The creation and perpetuation of Indigenous cultural-historical chronological narratives that rely on emphasizing objects’ “products” to the exclusion of the *practice* by which they are made represents one of the ways that Indigenous histories have been colonized and appropriated. It is not my intent to propose that settler-teachers learn or teach about the traditional practice of making, for example, quillwork boxes. Yet a lesson is evident through Fox’s and Migwans’ offerings about how history teachers might begin to critically challenge the inherent assumptions upon which Western archaeological-knowledges are based, and which, and whose, priorities are centred in defining the historical narratives taught in Ontario schools.

There is yet another, related thematic at work in the Western scientific construct of

chronology and that I have explored earlier in this work. Here, I am referring to the tendency of archaeologists and curriculum writers to base historical narratives on the myth of objectivity. The myth of objectivity, the belief that archaeologists can separate their own presuppositions, scaffolding, and colonial training from their studies of material culture, is arguably the reason why they often prioritize studying “the product” over “the practice.” To begin to challenge the colonial primacy of the product-centred approach in archaeological education, we can turn again to Fox’s and Migwans’ teaching. For example, in the museum collection, the artists are not teaching museum guests how to make traditional arts. However, through her teaching we can come to understand that her learning of quillwork is an example of Indigenous pedagogy, and is dependent on contextual questions like Who is doing the teaching? Who is doing the learning, and for what purpose? Fox is personally situated in her learning traditional knowledges from her grandmother. The poster’s articulation of Migwans’ and Fox’s teaching and learning, respectively, effectively emphasizes how historical teaching and learning can be better understood as a) a subjective process, relying on the locations of teachers and students in-relation-with each other based on the larger context of what kind of education is being enacted, and b) Epitomizing a challenge to the assumptions of historical knowledge construction upon which colonial curriculum is based. To learn from Indigenous educators is to be able to articulate a challenge to the myth of objectivity or the “unbiased” physical-sciences approach in archaeology and history education, a primary colonial power structure upon which curriculum writing is based.

Centring and legitimizing scientific knowledge construction models in history curriculum, for example, in product-based historical chronologies, privileges Western

knowledges. At the OCF, Fox's and Migwan's teachings challenge the power structures inherent in colonially constructed historical narratives that centre culture-chronologies, and instead prioritize the role of relationships in teaching about Anishinaabe culture. In the first textual poster in the case featuring Fox and Migwans' quillwork birchbark collection, the museum visitor learns that;

For G'Mewin Fox (née Migwans, b. 1983), artmaking has always been entwined with family and with land...Harvesting birchbark in spring, cutting sweetgrass above the root, and leaving tobacco for everything taken-these are ways that artmaking aligns respectfully and sustainably with the rhythms of the natural world. (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation)

From Fox's teachings, I can surmise that "the practice" of making "the products," quillwork birchbark boxes, are, for her, intimately related to the Places in which this traditional art is learned and carried out. As the quillwork objects themselves are the vehicles through which traditional teachings are embodied, she iterates how their production exists in-relation-with-the seasons, plants, and overall natural world, and are given thanks for with offerings of tobacco. For settler history teachers, Fox and Migwans' lessons offer insight not only about the role of culturally significant objects, but about how Anishinaabe history and culture can be conceived in-relation-with its Places and People. In this way, Fox's and Migwans' lessons share something with the educators at the CMH through the example of pottery in the "People of the Longhouse" collection. In that educational set, Indigenous Elders and scholars showcase culturally significant objects as markers of the important role that inter-generational relationships play. Subsequently, the objects communicate the significance those relationships have with Land/Place, such as clay to teach museum visitors about Haudenosaunee history and culture. At the OCF, Fox and Migwans similarly teach museum visitors about the

connections between grandmother-teacher, granddaughter-learner, and the Land/Place in which these relationships work together to help artists reproduce traditional arts like quillwork boxes.

The lessons taught in the “People of the Longhouse” collection, and by Fox and Migwans at the OCF might be described as relationship-centred teaching. Understanding relationship-centred teaching can support history teachers to challenge the myth of “unbiased” research or history-teaching, which replicate the assumptions of colonially-sanctioned concepts of knowledge-ownership. Attending to the lessons of the “People of the Longhouse” collection and Fox and Migwans’ offerings at the OCF, I am offered real-life examples of how history can be articulated through teaching with objects in a relational and subjective way. This lesson reminds me of the statement by Eber Hampton, cited by Shawn Wilson, that “Emotionless, passionless, abstract, intellectual, academic research is a...lie, it does not exist” and that “when we...pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to the people around us” (2008, pp. 100-101). Keeping this lesson in mind, along with the lessons that Indigenous educators impart in museum contexts for diverse publics can augment history teachers’ critical reassessment of the aims of colonial curriculum.

### **Place and Hydromythology at the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation**

Moving through the OCF’s collection, I approached the last of four tabletops in the large glass case featuring the work of G’Mewin Fox and Maime Migwans. The case includes three beautiful pieces of birch bark art, among other culturally significant objects. While the birch bark objects are different in form, one being a round box, another being a bolo tie, and the third, a belt buckle, each features a distinctive horned panther motif

accompanied by a canoe of people as if crossing a body of water. The textual poster describing Fox and Migwans' arts refer to the horned figure as Mishibizhiw, the Great Panther. Different sources alternately spell the name Mishipishu/Mishipizhu, with several other variants. Nelson (Anishinaabeg/Métis/Norwegian, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa) defines Mishipizhu as "an underwater panther and powerful *manitou*...a protector of natural resources and a mediator between the water, land, and sky beings (2013, p. 213, emphasis in original). She goes on to describe him as "...a Water spirit. Panther serpent. Horned snake. Underwater lynx. Water Keeper. Lake Guardian. River Protector. Storm Maker. Child Taker. Copper Medicine Maker" (p. 217). Nelson teaches us that, "Being people of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi headwaters, Anishinaabeg people are water people...Water *is* a manitou, and contains manitous" (p. 217). She explains that stories that feature Mishipizhu may be called myths or hydromyths, but cautions that her use of the word 'myth' is starkly different than the ways in which dominant narratives characterize the word;

In the field of cultural anthropology and more specifically folklore...the word "myth" often carries an undertone of quaint, primitive, false, and superstitious. There is often a pejorative connotation given to this word by anthropologists, historians, and other scholars. If not, then the word "myth" is sometimes over romanticized as an idealized, static, or essentialized story. I am not using the word in either of those ways. Nor in the strange way these two positions are sometimes combined when "Native myths" are dumbed down, oversimplified, and reduced to caricatures. I am using it in an affirmative way to refer to the true oral (and written) narratives of the Ojibwe people that include the other-than-human world...One relatively new category...is the term "hydromythology,"...the study of indigenous oral water myths. (pp. 218-220)

Through the teachings of both Nelson, and Fox and Migwans, the museum visitor can learn an integral lesson about the relationships between Anishinaabe history and

traditional arts, water, and Land and Place.

The textual poster in the OCF's collection from Fox and Migwans notes that, "Mamie's patterns came out of a...modern Woodlands milieu—flowers and forms borrowed as readily from nature magazines. Some of the patterns were designed by family members, like the Mishibizhiw (Great Panther) and other ancient images that Ann and Carl Beam (Maime Migwans' nephew) adapted from petroglyphs" (Ojibwe Cultural Foundation). Fox and Migwans' use of hydromythology and Mishipizhu to help narrate the relationships between people, the water/water manitous, and physical media like birch bark arts, integrated here for the purposes of educating museum visitors, serves to challenge historical Western conceptions of water's relationship to the lands over which it runs. In my colonial archaeological education, archaeologists and historians tended to relegate the study of water, for example in rivers, to its significance as providing transportation routes or as sources of fresh water in agricultural societies. Western notions of water as inanimate H<sub>2</sub>O – or, animate only insofar as it carries humans in their quest to travel – not only privilege Eurocentric interpretations of knowledge construction based on positivistic frameworks, but they consign water to an idle role, situating its value in terms of its utility to serve humanity, and as a substance that is separate and distinct from the soil that makes up archaeological sites. Renée Elizabeth Mzinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard, (Nishnaabeg-kwe, Dokis First Nation) (2008), explains the distinction between Anishinaabe and Western concepts of the interconnectedness of water and Land;

Even the things that are considered inanimate, we call our relatives. We call the Earth "our real Mother," the land as our "Mother's lap," and water the blood of this Mother the Earth...Whereas colonial society views the environment as separate, the earth consisting of raw material resources to use, exploit, and deplete, Nishnaabeg people view the land, water, plants, animals, and sky world as one unified and interdependent living system



that works to sustain us all. As the land, water, sky, plants, and animals are connected, so is every aspect of life. (p. 96)

From Mzinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard, I learn that Anishinaabe history and culture is intimately connected not only with the lands, but with the *waters* with which it co-exists (Mzinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard, 2008, pp. 89, 91, emphasis mine). From Nelson, I learn that “Mishipizhu is uniquely localized to the water landscapes and ecological knowledge of the Anishinaabeg...” (2013, p. 221). Returning to the teachings of Fox and Migwans, I learn how water can be understood as a significant component of Land and Place, in-relation-with the people who live and move by, on, and across it. As such, Fox and Migwans featuring the water manitou Mishipizhu in a variety of birch bark items featured at the OCF demonstrate to visitors that culturally significant objects can teach lessons about hydromythology, linking the artists and traditional birch bark crafts (culturally significant objects), to water-as-(part of)-Place, specific to Anishinaabe history and culture.

As a history teacher learning from Anishinaabe educators, I do not argue that specific Mishipizhu stories should be included into history curriculum. This may constitute a breach in the respectful fences that Lyons suggests should separate private knowledges from appropriation (Lyons, 2009, p. 79). Instead, the artists’ birch bark objects featuring Mishipizhu instruct museum visitors about the primacy of Place-over-historical chronology, as their quillwork examples do in the previous sections of the case featuring their traditional arts. As in Fox and Migwans’ quillwork, and the pottery in the “People of the Longhouse” collection at the CMH, the OCF’s objects featuring Mishipizhu attest to people’s relationships with Places, in this case, the waters of Anishinaabe traditional territories, rather than to historical chronologies. As in the aforementioned collections,

Fox and Migwans' collection depicting Mishipizhu remains notably exempt from any tendency to date culturally significant objects or to arrange them into frameworks that attempt to define a calendar-date based historical chronology.

**Place/Land-Based Emphasis in the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), Washington, D.C.**

After sitting to clear my mind and then offering tobacco outside the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., I entered the galleries and moved through each section. The deep history focus of my research led me to the fourth floor, on which the "Our Universes" exhibition is located. This exhibition is dedicated to the traditional knowledges and cultures of a selection of Indigenous societies from across the Western Hemisphere. In this gallery, I learned about some of the ways that Anishinaabe educators use museum spaces to teach guests about history and culture especially through the context of traditional teachings, such as the Medicine Wheel, the story of "Little Boy and the Seven Teachings," and the Seven Grandfather Teachings themselves. Traditional teachings like these and the ways in which gallery educators arrange them instruct guests about the importance of Anishinaabe Places in historical and contemporary contexts, standing in stark contrast to the emphasis Western archaeologists and curriculum writers place on historical-chronological sequences as methods of historical knowledge-construction.

The exhibition's central room features a large dimly lit space, which emphasizes the ceiling, dotted with hundreds of small lights that emulate the stars in a night sky. Eight smaller gallery rooms branch out through short corridors from the central room. Each smaller gallery contains information plaques and culturally significant objects from one

Indigenous culture. At the time of this research in 2021-2022, the NMAI's website describes the cultures featured in the eight galleries, which include:

...the Pueblo of Santa Clara (Española, New Mexico, USA), Anishinaabe (Hollow Water and Sagkeeng Bands, Manitoba, Canada), Lakota (Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, USA), Quechua (Comunidad de Phaqchanta, Cusco, Peru), Hupa (Hoopa Valley, California, USA), Q'eq'chi' Maya (Cobán, Guatemala), Mapuche (Temuco, Chile), and Yup'ik (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska, USA). The design of these galleries reflects each community's interpretation of the order of the world. (Smithsonian Institution, 2022)

The fact that the exhibition features societies from a wide geographic range throughout the hemisphere demonstrates the NMAI's commitment to represent the diversity of Indigenous societies that exist on Turtle Island and beyond. A poster-plaque greets the guest at the entrance to the Anishinaabe gallery, which depicts a forest under a night sky. The poster bears a quote which reads, "To be Anishinaabe is to understand your place in all creation. We are spiritual beings on a human journey. Everything in the Anishinaabe world is alive. Everything has a spirit and everything is interconnected" (Garry Raven (Morning Star), Community Curator, 2000)." Elder Garry Raven's teaching suggests to me the importance of spirituality, the interconnectedness of all things, and the significance of place in Anishinaabe traditional teachings.

Following the first poster, a second one depicts a Medicine Wheel divided into quadrants, with concentric circles running through the Medicine Wheel, subdividing each quadrant. The yellow Eastern Quadrant's subdivisions are labelled with the concepts that the quadrant represents, including East, Children, Eagle, Tobacco, Spring, and Fire. The black Southern Quadrant is labelled South, Youth, Wolf, Sweetgrass, Summer, and Earth. The Red Western Quadrant is labelled West, Parents, Buffalo, Sage, Fall, and Water. Finally, the white Northern Quadrant is labelled North, Elders, Bear, Cedar, Winter, and

Wind (NMAI). On a short section of a wall facing inwards to the Anishinaabe gallery, a third, larger poster-plaque hangs. This plaque bears pictures and text that acknowledge the Anishinaabe Elders, referred to in the plaque as “Community Curators,” who authored the Anishinaabe gallery.<sup>24</sup> In naming the Elders who organized the lessons in the gallery, the NMAI is exemplifying an aspect of an Indigenous research paradigm that Shawn Wilson (2008) discusses. Wilson suggests that:

...the ethics involved in an Indigenous research paradigm sometimes differ from the dominant academic way of doing things. I would like to use the real names of everyone I worked with on this research, so that you will know exactly whom I am writing about...how can I be held accountable to the relationships I have with these people if I don't name them? (Wilson, 2008, p. 63)

The NMAI presents historical knowledges from particular Elders, and so the museum, and by extension its guests like myself, are accountable to them.

After the Medicine Wheel and Community Curators plaques, the guest moves into the short hallway leading deeper into the Anishinaabe gallery, where they encounter a short textual introduction preceding a series of three pictures on the left side wall. The text and pictures relate a short version of the story of “Little Boy and the Seven Teachings” (NMAI). It tells how the Creator looks after the Anishinaabe People, “But in return, the Anishinaabe must look after the Creator’s creations” (NMAI). The story recounts that later on, the Anishinaabe stopped “using the gifts they had received from the Creator” (NMAI) and developed sicknesses and unhappiness. One day a boy began to look for solutions to the people’s suffering. Also known as Water Drum Boy, “The Creator gave us our purpose on earth by giving Little Boy teachings to help the people. (Mark

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<sup>24</sup> The Anishinaabe Elders who authored the gallery include Garry Raven, Elder from Hollow Water First Nation in Manitoba, Wilson Scott, Elder from Hollow Water First Nation in Manitoba, Conrad Spence, Elder from Sagkeeng First Nation near Pine Falls, Manitoba, and Mark Thompson, Elder from Sagkeeng First Nation near Pine Falls, Manitoba (NMAI).

Thompson, 2002).” This short background to the traditional story prepares the guest for an encounter with visual depictions of important historical events in the story.

Following the poster-plaque that introduces the story of Little Boy and the Seven Teachings is a series of three hand-drawn pictures that appear to have originally been done on wide strips of birch bark. They appear to be digitized copies of the birch bark originals, embossed right onto the wall itself. Although they are not accompanied by information cards stating the artist’s name(s) or the dates of creation, they help narrate, in brief summary, the story of Little Boy and the Seven Teachings. The first picture depicts Little Boy leaving a lodge and walking towards the sun. The picture’s caption informs the guest, in part, that in an effort to find a way to help his people, “He started walking toward the east where the sun rises” (NMAI). The second picture depicts four scenes in which Little Boy interacts with plants and animals, including a buffalo, a fish, birds, turtles and a wolf. Little Boy is shown at different stages of life in each of the four scenes, mirroring the stages of life presented in the Medicine Wheel at the entrance to the Anishinaabe gallery. The associated caption teaches the guest that “Little Boy continued walking to the south...west, and...north. The animals taught him many lessons about survival, and...the healing power of the plants. He...grew into an old man on his journey” (NMAI). The third and final picture depicts Little Boy in two scenes. In the first scene, now elderly, he stands with arms outstretched to seven faces that seem to rise from the hills and Land, under a star-filled sky. In the second scene, he stands among people in the midst of a village under the watchful gaze of a wolf. In a caption below the picture, the gallery educators teach that, “In a dream, Little Boy went to the Seven Grandfathers, and they explained to him the meaning of all that he had learned. With the wolf as a guide,

Little Boy returned home and shared all that he had learned with his people, helping them to life a good life on earth” (NMAI). The three pictures presenting the story of Little Boy bringing many teachings to the people, including the Seven Grandfather Teachings, precede a large glass case featuring a selection of Anishinaabe culturally significant objects, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

Eight poster-plaques immediately follow the large glass case, placed on the wall of the hallway, which the guest encounters as they exit the Anishinaabe gallery. The plaque-posters feature the Seven Grandfather Teachings given to Little Boy. In the order that the museum guest encounters the posters as they leave the gallery, there is one poster each explaining Truth, Humility, Honesty, Courage, Respect, Love, Wisdom, and a final poster entitled “The Seven Teachings” with quotes from Elder Garry Raven and Elder Wilson Scott. The posters not only define each of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, but through the posters, the gallery educators teach museum guests some details of Anishinaabe history. For example, on the poster entitled, “Kikayndama Wisiwin-Wisdom,” Elder Garry Raven teaches that, “Master of water and wood, the beaver symbolizes wisdom. In the past, Anishinaabe elders learned about medicines, such as poplar bark, by watching the beaver (Garry Raven, 2000).” One concept I learn from Elder Garry Raven is how traditional teachings, as deemed by the Elder to be appropriate to share with non-Anishinaabe people, firmly root historical events such as medicine-learning in the context of Land/Place. Through the teaching about Wisdom, Elder Garry Raven explains how a historical event remains connected to Anishinaabe Places through wood and water, and through the beaver and the poplar trees. Contextualizing historical teachings from traditional stories stands in stark contrast to Western approaches, through

which culturally significant objects are seized, catalogued, and analyzed, and ordered into historical-chronological sequences to provide what archaeologists refer to as “scientific proof” for historical processes like changes in technology.

The wall panels featuring the Medicine Wheel and the drawings of the story of Little Boy preceding the large glass case, and the posters featuring the Seven Grandfather Teachings following the case, effectively surround/encircle/complete the Anishinaabe gallery. They contextualize the gallery by framing the historical culturally significant objects in the glass case in the methodologies of traditional story and traditional teachings that connect Anishinaabe Peoples and history to the complex aspects of the Lands and Places they continue to inhabit.

### **Place-Based Emphasis in the Museum of Ojibwa Culture (MOC)**

The Museum of Ojibwa Culture in St. Ignace, Michigan, is associated with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. It is housed in a small building that was the original mission headquarters of the Jesuit priests in the region. After sitting to clear my mind and then offering tobacco outside the museum, I entered the building and moved through each of its 3 interior galleries. In the second of three gallery rooms in the museum, the educators have organized 2 learning centers that anchor Anishinaabe histories and cultures to the Places in which they thrive. One of the centers is a large wall mural and is entitled “Ojibwa Migration Chart.” It documents the historic movement of Anishinaabe Peoples from the Atlantic Coast to the Great Lakes area. Along the top of the mural and extending its entire length is a rendition of Eshkwaykeeshik’s (James Red Sky, Senior’s) Migration Chart. The reproduced images are parts of a series of birch bark scrolls (wiigwaasabak). The original scrolls are now in the possession of the Glenbow-

Alberta Institute (MOA).

The diagram of the map presented here constitutes a rich collection of images, for which the educators provide a guide below the map reproduction. The guide lists significant symbols that appear on the map. The list of symbols featured on the map include “Ge-wah-ni-chee-gay ze-bee, or “wrong rivers,”” “O-gee-jok” or the Crane,” which “appear[s] on many migration charts, inside the bounds of Lake Superior,” “Negig or Otter,” “Ma-kwa or Bear,” “Mis-shi-pe-shu or The Great Lynx or Underwater Panther...who controlled the water of lakes, rivers and streams,” “Mis-shi-nah-may-gway or Huge Fish Monster,” and “Megis-a cowrie shell...originally...found by the Ojibwa forefathers at the “Great Water” or Atlantic Ocean” (MOC).

The educators who authored the mural include a short version of the story of the Migration “As Told by James Red Sky (Eshkwaykeeshik) to Selwyn Dewdney” (MOC). It recounts how the Bear carried a message from the Great Manito to the people, and was assisted by Megis, the shell, and the Otter. The message travelled “...down the St. Lawrence River to Montreal, past the Lachine Rapids to Mattawa...to Lake Huron, through the Straits of Macinac to Sault Ste. Marie” (MOC). The Migration ended after the message travelled past the “...west end of Lake Superior...westward to Leech Lake” (MOC). On one section of the mural, situated below the map reproduction, list of symbols, and the short version of the oral tradition, another panel shows the visitor a contemporary map of Eastern Turtle Island/North America and charts the points that coincide with significant locations in the reproduction of the wiigwaasabak. Its caption teaches the guest that, “The maps of the ancient migration of the Ojibwa have identifiable reference points on the modern landscape” (MOC). In the Ojibwa Migration Chart,



educators use a culturally significant object (reproduction) to narrate Anishinaabe hi(story) in the context of storied Places. There are, of course, events which occur in chronological order in the narrative. However, in the Migration Chart and associated mural panels, there is no mention of calendar dates. In my reading of the Migration Chart, it is the primacy of stories about Places which most strongly serve to contextualize Anishinaabe hi(story), embodied in the structured use of a culturally significant object.

The second wall mural in the gallery is entitled “Ojibwa Seasonal Movement,” and it builds on the lessons I learned about the significance of storied Places in Anishinaabe histories. The mural is so strongly situated in story, that its first panel is entitled “NAN-A-BO-JO” and provides a brief version of an oral tradition about “how the seasons came to be” (MOC). The story relates how Nan-a-bo-jo and his brother, Pee-pauk-a-wis, decided to run a race. Nan-a-bo-jo was winning, and “as he ran, the sun shone warm upon him, the leaves spoke to him...[and several animals greeted him]. “Here comes...our friend, who brings us fine weather” (MOC). When Pee-pauk-a-wis became discouraged with losing the race, he incited the winds, clouds, and waters to flood the rivers and block out the sun, but all Nan-a-bo-jo had to do was to look back and smile to cause favourable weather to return. When Nan-a-bo-jo rested at one point, his brother overtook him, and for a time winter settled over the land. “Thus it is that, when the weather changes quickly...the people say that Nan-a-bo-jo and his brother...are running their race” (MOC).

Contextualizing the Seasonal Movement mural in story, the subsequent panels depict different resources that Anishinaabe Peoples accessed during each season. The panels are arrayed around a circular diagram divided into twelve sections, one for each month.

Information cards and drawings representing the 4 seasons occupy different quadrants around the circle. An introductory card teaches the guest that Anishinaabe Peoples “...moved from place to place within their territories to utilize the most abundant food resources” (MOC). The card labelled “Summer (Nibin)” tells us that “Men hunted and fished while women collected berries and manufactured many useful items.” In the “Fall (Dakwa-gig),” “...men hunted and prepared for the gill net fishery. Fishing offshore at this season was dangerous due to unpredictable weather...” (MOC). In “Winter (Bibon),” “...villages broke up as each family retired to its own hunting and trapping grounds...Winter was also the time elders taught children the history and legends of the tribe” (MOC). Finally, in “Spring (Zigwun),” “...Ojibwa families returned from winter hunting to congregate at the mouths of streams to fish...They also made sugar from maple sap at this season” (MOC). In my reading of the Ojibwa Seasonal Movement mural, like in the Migration Chart, I learned about the integral connections between Anishinaabe cultures and histories, and the storied Places in which they thrive. The traditions of the Migration and of Nan-a-bo-jo and how the seasons came to be, story the deep history of Anishinaabe Peoples without lionizing historical-chronological frameworks, contrary to colonial curriculum, in order to foster historical ways of knowing based on Anishinaabe epistemologies.

Considering all of the museums I visited holistically, I learned that there are diverse ways in which Indigenous educators centered storied Places in their articulation of historical narratives, and the emphases on Place superseded emphases on chronological discourses. In all of the museums, educators employed a variety of methods. In listing a few of them that stood out at each particular museum, I do not mean to reduce those

methods to one or two applications. Rather, I point out the methods and foci that stood out to me as a guest, interacting with the galleries from my own position and background. At the CMH, Indigenous educators implemented diverse culturally significant objects divided into 5 open-concept rooms that aligned with different geographic regions of Turtle Island/North America. At the OCF, educators utilized traditional skills and crafts such as quill work to iterate deep connections to storied Places, including both Land and water. Additionally, lessons from the CMH and OCF emphasized the significance of gendered relationships of teaching and learning, and how the spirit of such learning can be found in the practice of crafting culturally significant objects, rather than in the form of their finished products. At the NMAI, Washington D. C., I learned about Anishinaabe connections to Places through traditional stories and teachings, such as Little Boy and the Seven Teachings, and the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Finally, at the MOC I learned how Anishinaabe educators taught Place-based histories through guided narrations of reproductions of culturally significant objects such as the wiigwaasabak of the Migration, and through the Seasonal Movement mural. The methodologies with which Indigenous educators narrated Place-based histories are not only diverse, they also challenge dominant methodologies that prioritize positivist scientific presuppositions. As I moved to different sections of the museum galleries, I learned about alternate ways through which Indigenous educators disrupted colonial narratives, including one based on nineteenth-century cultural-evolutionary frameworks. It is to my learning in these areas that I now turn.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Cultural-Evolutionary vs. Cultural Continuity and Colonial Change

In this chapter, I confront and work through some of the teachings about Darwinian cultural-evolutionism that were a part of my university education in Anthropology and Archaeology. Subsequently, in my teacher-education program and then in my experience as a secondary history teacher since 1998, I have noticed that history curriculum and textbooks continue to promote Darwinian cultural-evolutionary historical narratives that position Indigenous histories and cultures as inferior to those of the Western world. As part of my research in museums organized by Indigenous educators, I am seeking in this dissertation to learn the extent to which narrations of cultural “progress” or “development over time” are/are not manifested by Indigenous educators in museum contexts for diverse audiences.

As I have shown thus far, historical narratives that emphasize cultural-evolutionary themes are often organized into historical-chronological timelines. However, cultural-evolutionary perspectives imply certain concepts not necessarily inherent in historical-chronological narratives. Prominent nineteenth-century anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan and Edward Burnett Tylor developed cultural-evolutionary concepts which include for example, the contention that human cultures evolve from so-called primitive “savagery” to so-called “civilizations” based in part on cultural developments that can be archaeologically identified through the study of culturally significant objects (Morgan, 1851 (1995), 1878, Tylor, 1867, 1878). The pervasive and highly Eurocentric contentions of cultural-evolutionary models suggest that such models can be identified as a category of narratives distinct from those based solely on historical-chronological sequences.

Western museum curators and history curriculum writers have historically arranged Indigenous culturally significant objects in museums and historical narratives in school curriculum according to Eurocentric cultural-evolutionary sequences. Organizing historical narratives according to evolutionary schematics positions Indigenous cultures and culture-histories at particular stages on a Eurocentric scale of cultural “development.” Many nineteenth-century anthropologists participated in the colonial practice of locating cultures on an evolutionary scale, judging the culture’s “development” according to certain benchmarks that supposedly indicated how “complex” the culture is/was (Morgan 1851 (1995), 1878, Tylor, 1867, 1878). An example of this is in the proclivity of colonial archaeologists to arrange collections of stone tool types in progressions from what they often call “simpler” to more “complex” expressions of technological and artistic development. The forcing of Indigenous culturally significant objects into such a scheme not only serves to appropriate Indigenous culturally significant objects for colonial purposes, but it has been used to position Indigenous cultures as inferior to Western cultures. While many contemporary Western anthropologists, sociologists and social-theorists now disavow social-Darwinian models of cultural development as being inherently racist (Hersey, 1993), authors of history curriculum continue to use this approach in organizing Indigenous histories in curriculum resources like textbooks (Brinkley, 2015, Newman et. al, 2001, see examples below). Historical narratives perpetuated in contemporary history curriculum that illustrate now-disavowed Western notions of cultural-evolution similarly appropriate Indigenous culturally significant objects and repeat the colonial violence of positioning Indigenous cultures as inferior to Western cultures.

## **Social Darwinism/Cultural-Evolutionism**

Cultural-evolutionary schemata is a remnant of the social-Darwinian arguments of influential nineteenth-century anthropologists, archaeologists, and social theorists such as John Lubbock (1865(1913)), Lewis Henry Morgan (1851 (1995), 1878), and Edward Burnett Tylor (1867, 1878). Archaeological history scholar Bruce Trigger (1993) notes that “A Darwinian view of human nature was incorporated into prehistoric archaeology by...John Lubbock (1834-1913)...with his book *Prehistoric Times*...Between 1865 and 1913 this book went through seven editions...and it long served as a textbook of archaeology” (p. 114). American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan more specifically iterated Darwinian cultural-evolutionist beliefs into scholarship on Indigenous Peoples in his 1851 work “League of the Ho-dé-no-sau-nee Or Iroquois” (1995). Expanding on Eurocentric racist theories, Morgan later penned his 1878 book *Ancient Society*, and in it stated that:

The latest investigations respecting the early condition of the human race are tending to the conclusion that mankind commenced their career at the bottom of the scale and worked their way up from savagery to civilization through the slow accumulations of experimental knowledge...As it is undeniable that portions of the human family have existed in a state of savagery, other portions in a state of barbarism, and still other portions in a state of civilization, it seems equally so that these three distinct conditions are connected with each other in a natural as well as necessary sequence of progress. (pp. 3-4)

Morgan argued that human societies evolve from savagery, to barbarism, and finally to civilization status. He and other nineteenth-century social theorists define societies living in a purported state of savagery as those which subsist on hunting, gathering, and fishing, and which can make and use fire, and possess the beginnings of the knowledge of how to make pottery (1878, p. 10). Morgan defines societies living in a supposed state of

barbarism as those which have developed pottery, domesticated plants and animals, developed brick and mortar architecture, irrigation, the smelting of ores, for example, iron, and the beginnings of the use of writing (1878, pp. 10-11). He argues that societies evolve or progress to supposed states of civilization when they develop the full use of a phonetic alphabet and produce and maintain historical records (1878, p. 12). Nineteenth-century anthropological models of “civilization” that prioritize the incorporation of writing over oral histories are extensions of long-standing European ideas about cultural “advancement,” for example those developed by Greek thinkers like Isocrates and Aristotle in their articulation of rhetoric. Haskins points out that:

...the *technē rhētorikē* of Aristotle crowns the evolution from oral...to literate rationality. This assumption, based to a large degree on Aristotle’s literate conception, appears excessively deterministic, since it pictures a uniform trajectory of linguistic and cultural change from orality to literacy. (Haskins, 2001, p. 174)

Eurocentric biases like the one Haskins points out that prioritize writing over oral traditions as a marker of cultural evolution to a level of so-called “civilization” remain in history curriculum as a critical benchmark from which students learn to divide societies according to outdated social-Darwinian ranking schemes that continue to perpetuate colonial violence.

Subsequent anthropologists have largely eschewed nineteenth century cultural-evolutionary theories based on social-Darwinism, and some, such as the “Father of American Anthropology” Franz Boas, strongly criticized it (Ben-zvi, 2003, p. 211, Lyons, 2010, pp. 80-81). For example, Hersey (1993) qualifies Morgan’s work, stating that;

Lewis Henry Morgan has long occupied a controversial and contested position in what might be described as the mythic pantheon of nineteenth-century anthropological forebears. Widely differentiated sub-disciplines or traditions within anthropology trace their descent from these

ancestors...The greater part of the critique of Morgan's work centers on the evolutionist argument, found most elaborately expressed in *Ancient Society*. (pp. 53-54)

Although the kind of cultural-evolutionist and social-Darwinian theories of early anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan are widely critiqued in contemporary Anthropology, Hersey here notes that their impact on a wide variety of sub-fields has been substantial. A survey of secondary history curriculum, and its associated and supporting materials, suggests that their authors still widely subscribe to those theories. A brief example of the pervasiveness of cultural-evolutionary perspectives in the curriculum helps to situate my research in the museum galleries.

### **Cultural-Evolutionism in Ontario Curriculum**

Curriculum writers have explicitly written social-Darwinist cultural-evolutionary perspectives into contemporary Ontario history curriculum and textbooks. For example, in the grade 11 World History to the End of the Fifteenth Century course (CHW3M1), curriculum expectations direct that students are to;

B1.1 describe the evolution of some early societies from their beginnings as hunter-gatherer societies, and explain some of the developments that enabled them to change.

B1.3 identify the cradles of civilization around the world, and analyse them to determine various elements that are critical to the rise of a civilization.

B1.4 assess the criteria by which societies are judged to be “civilizations” (e.g.,...political influence, economic dominance...geographic/imperial expansion, developments in science/technology, written language...).

B2.3 describe various types of innovation in early societies (e.g., technological innovations: the wheel...writing, alphabets...coins...), and assess their importance to these societies and to the emergence of different civilizations. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015, pp. 322-323)

The clear links between nineteenth-century cultural-evolutionary theories and contemporary curriculum presented in the 2015 Ontario expectations is iterated in course



textbooks written to support those expectations. For example, Newman et. al.'s 2001 textbook was written earlier than the 2015 curriculum, but it demonstrates that those cultural-evolutionary theories have been woven into curriculum for decades. Newman et. al. teach students that;

The process and pace at which various civilizations developed differed in each case, but there are several characteristics commonly accepted as indications that a society is “civilized.” These include: the emergence of a centralized government, agricultural intensification, specialization of occupations, a stratified class structure, merchants and trade, the development of science and a form of writing, and the development of a state religion. (2001, p. 36)

This textbook instructs students that “civilizations” include aspects of culture, such as centralized governments and writing, which position Western cultures as exemplars of the most “evolved” societies. Cultural-evolutionary nomenclature pervades the work, for example when the authours suggest that, “Prior to the development of early civilizations, trade was generally between bands and consisted of raw materials such as obsidian, amber, and shells. As new specialized trades [i.e., occupations] developed, trade shifted to manufactured goods,” (p. 38). Here I note the authour’s use of the term “bands” to contrast the societies being differentiated from “civilizations,” which the authours imply are more highly “evolved.” These terms directly reflect the cultural-evolutionary scheme of nineteenth-century anthropologists such as Morgan. The textbook authours’ use of terminology like “development/developed” reveals the influence of cultural-evolutionary models of thought.

In discussing the terminology that curriculum writers use, I note a stark distinction between the Western tendency to use terms that assign cultures to stages on the social-Darwinian scale of cultural evolution, and the claiming of some of the same terms by

Indigenous educators to describe aspects of Indigenous history and culture. For example, in the case described above, Newman et. al. list the presence of “Merchants and Trade” as one of the benchmarks of a so-called “civilized” society (2001, pp. 37-38). In the previous chapter, I noted how Indigenous Elders and scholars at the CMH organized a gallery entitled “Trade Fairs,” featuring examples of items that would have been traded between Mandan and Assiniboiné Peoples at a ceremonial gathering. Clearly, trade constitutes an important part of interaction between these groups. Further, I note the Elder’s and scholar’s use of the term “trade” to describe interactions like this. In what seems like a colonial attempt to differentiate trade fairs like the example in the CMH from the kind of trading done in societies they label as “civilizations,” Newman et. al. further isolate the features of the trading system often used in societies they describe as “civilizations.” They teach students that, in so-called “civilizations,” along with the specialized trades [i.e., occupations], “was the development of a merchant class that produced nothing, but earned wealth by helping to facilitate the exchange of goods. With the rise of a merchant class, shops and markets arose, bartering become more complex, which led to the development of currency” (Newman et. al., 2001, p. 38). From this quote, I note that the textbook writers qualify trade in so-called “civilizations” in ways that seem predisposed to situate it in contrast to the kind of trade in which Mandan and Assiniboiné societies participate. The authors teach that trade in so-called “civilizations” is carried out by a distinct social class of merchants who “produce nothing” save for wealth (p. 38), and who utilize shops and eventually a government-approved system of standardized currency. Students learn therefore that it is not so much the presence of trade that contributes to a society being “civilized,” but rather how “advanced” or “evolved” that

trading system is, which textbook authours suggest may move the society closer to the Western ideal of a “civilization.”

In my reading of the “Trade Fairs” gallery at the CMH, the Elders and scholars did not position trade as a somehow “civilizing” feature of society. Instead, the information plaques conveyed to me the message that trade fairs are complex, ceremonial, and deeply rooted in relationships. For example, one plaque describes the wooden canopy constructed for the fair, under which an assortment of items sits. It reads, “A canopy built of poplar poles and branches was the centre of the fair...The canopy was also used for public negotiations and pipe ceremonies” (CMH). Another plaque teaches that traders “developed...a special sign language to communicate with strangers” in order to facilitate communication for the trading of goods (CMH). A third plaque notes how, accompanying ceremonial trading, one-to-one private trading was also conducted, often by women, moving from tent to tent, which could also open up “friendly visiting and feasting” (CMH). Western history curriculum resources qualify trading, and especially the development of shops, merchants and currency, as hallmarks of “civilizations,” locating societies who have these features on a cultural-evolutionary scale. In contrast, Indigenous Elders and scholars at the CMH situate trading as complex, ceremonial, and relational.

The fifth section of Newman et. al.’s 2001 textbook, consisting of “The Americas,” contains three chapters, each featuring one of three societies which Western anthropologists have labelled as civilizations following the cultural-evolutionary model. These include the Maya, the Aztecs, and the Inca (p. 394-489). According to nineteenth-century cultural-evolutionary models, these three societies exemplify the characteristics

of what European social theorists have defined as “civilizations.” Exacerbating this, contemporary Western values permeate the textbook resource. For example, the authors assert that “The Aztecs were a people of contradiction. Their empire rested on war and human sacrifice, yet they sought to capture in song and poetry the beauty of the world around them,”<sup>25</sup> (p. 432). Additionally, Newman et. al. include a Spanish colonial drawing of an Aztec pyramid upon which a human sacrifice is taking place. In the picture’s caption, the authors ask students, “Can people who make human sacrifice be considered a civilization?” (p. 433). Two things are especially revealing here. First, the authors’ calling attention to the question of whether people who practiced human sacrifice can be considered civilized runs contrary to the criteria they list as prerequisites of a civilization. Specifically, they list “state religion” as a component of civilization, then question whether an aspect of Aztec state religion disqualifies the Aztecs from “civilization” level status. Second is the fact that the authors refer several times to the practice of human sacrifice in the textbook, contextualizing it in contemporary Judeo-Christian morality, yet not once do they make mention of the many documented examples of human sacrifice from the European Greco-Roman or Celtic societies. Only in the chapters featuring the civilizations of the Americas do the authors make any reference to human sacrifice, despite its occurrence in European societies. Neither are there any chapters, in this Canadian-authored world history textbook, that feature the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island/North America. Considering the textbook’s emphasis on “civilizations,” the cultural-evolutionary perspective in contemporary curriculum is, indeed, clear.

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<sup>25</sup> The inclusion of the term “yet” implies that the two concepts being contrasted, namely the resting of an empire on “war and human sacrifice,” and the effort to capturing “in song and poetry the beauty of the world around them” are somehow mutually exclusive or in some way constitute an oxymoron.

Nineteenth-century cultural-evolutionist models are not only part of secondary history curriculum in general, but they have also been specifically used to marginalize Indigenous societies in attempts to force them into locations on the Western cultural-evolutionary spectrum based on their technological capabilities as represented by culturally significant objects. In a grade 11 American History (CHA3U1) textbook, for example, Brinkley instructs students that;

For many decades, scholars believed that all early migrations into the Americas came from humans crossing an ancient land bridge over the Bering Straight into what is now Alaska, approximately 11,000 years ago...The migrations were probably the result of the development of new stone tools-spears and other hunting implements-with which migrating people could pursue the large animals that regularly crossed between Asia and North America. (2015, p. 2)

Here, Brinkley uses archaeological evidence to claim that it was the evolution of stone tools that resulted in the Bering Straight migrations which he asserts led to the population of Turtle Island/North America (Brinkley, 2015, p. 2). He offers Ontario students definitive answers on the Beringia Theory of migration while refraining from applying the term “civilization” to Indigenous Peoples, despite the fact that scholars in the academy continue to contest both the Beringia Theory and definitions of “civilization.” Contemporary debates in the academy among scholars of History and Archaeology about what kinds of societies “merit” being considered “developed enough” to be classified as civilizations unfortunately find their way into many secondary history curriculum resources. Note for example a 2011 textbook by Stearns, Adas, Schwartz, and Gilbert intended for AP (advanced placement) students, in which they teach that;

Some scholars prefer to define civilizations only as societies with enough economic surpluses to form divisions of labor and a social hierarchy involving significant inequalities. This is a very inclusive definition, and under it...*even* some groups like North American Indians who combined

farming with hunting would be *drawn in*. Others, however, press the concepts of civilization *further*... (2011, p. 17, emphasis added)<sup>26</sup>

Brinkley's teachings incorporating stone tools, and Stearns et. al.'s teachings about the definition of "civilization" exemplify the colonial use of archaeological materials to both sabotage Indigenous claims to the Land and to situate Indigenous cultures along an evolutionary path that conforms to Western cultural-evolutionary schematics. Cognizant of some of the ways that curriculum and textbook writers splice cultural-evolutionary schemata into history curriculum and its associated resources, I approached my research in the museum galleries with a commitment to examine the extent to which Indigenous educators adopted/eschewed these school-based schemata in the lessons taught to diverse publics.

### **Cultural Continuity and Colonial-wrought Change at the CMH**

Against the tendency of curriculum materials, the educators who organized the galleries at the Canadian Museum of History and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation patently avoid arranging historical materials in ways that portray Indigenous cultures from cultural-evolutionary perspectives. Earlier in this work, I discussed Silliman's contrast between what archaeologists call the "short purée" and the "long durée."

The "short purée" is the view that the colonial encounter was the "decisive moment in indigenous histories," which halted those histories, while the "long durée," emphasizes the much longer-term histories of Indigenous Peoples and "grants primacy to Indigenous

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<sup>26</sup> The disturbing language context in which the authors present this excerpt is made more damaging by words such as "*even*...would be *drawn in*." The phrase implies that Indigenous cultures "might" be deemed as civilizations, but I read the phrasing to imply an illegitimate inclusion in the classification of civilizations that the authors suggest is artificially forced. It also includes all Indigenous societies as one group, while not so classifying European or Western Asian societies. Additionally, I read the word "further" here to imply that Indigenous societies occupy a location along a road of cultural-evolutionary development that is not as advanced or as developed as others.

agency” (Silliman, 2012, pp. 113-114). I do not suggest here that Indigenous educators working in museum contexts operate within the Western binary of short *purée*-long *durée*. Rather, the educators teach visitors about both long-term continuity and short-term change, tending to emphasize continuity in narrations of deep history. Change is primarily featured through representations of the effects of colonialism on Indigenous communities and histories. The lessons taught in these museum galleries have exemplified the holistic ways in which history can be narrated that teach lessons about both long-term historical depth, and the marked impact of colonialism on Indigenous histories. The historical themes that Indigenous educators prioritize in museum galleries can inform history teachers about some of the ways that we might work towards in order to begin decolonizing our teaching practice.

The earliest time periods of human presence in Turtle Island/North America that museum educators narrate in the Canadian Museum of History’s First People’s Hall are similar to those of many of the colonially-authored textbooks, that is, the Ice Age period from approximately 15,000 years ago. However, the narrations of this early history in the CMH includes neither the assertion that the ancestors of contemporary Indigenous Peoples migrated to Turtle Island/North America from Siberia, nor the Eurocentric Darwinian notion that Indigenous cultures evolved from lesser to greater states of cultural complexity.

The visitor at the CMH is directed through a rotunda with a hallway curving around its perimeter, which, all together, is called the “Our Origins” Gallery. One of the first presentations in this gallery is called “At the Edge of the Ice,” and includes wall maps and textual descriptions of what the maps depict. The maps show the extent of glaciers

across Turtle Island/North America over time, as discerned by archaeologists. A section of text reads, “What is known is that Beringia was the gateway to North America, the region through which the ancestors of modern First Peoples passed, before the world took its present form.” Immediately after the “At the Edge of the Ice” section, the visitor walks through a gallery reconstruction of the Bluefish Caves archaeological site. This site is one of the locations where Western archaeologists have used techniques like stratigraphic analysis to claim human occupation from at least 12,000 years ago (Fiedel, 1990, p. 58). In this gallery, guests walk across a glass floor under which a replica of the floor of Bluefish Caves has been constructed. Assemblages of stone and bone tools and animal bones have been arranged as they were at the original Bluefish Caves site. An untitled wall plaque describes how archaeologists believe people occupied Bluefish Caves between 25,000 to about 10,000 years ago. Culturally significant objects visible through the floor include microblades and burins (engraving tools), as well as bones of caribou, mountain sheep, saiga, and mammoth which were processed for meat and marrow. At first glance, the lessons taught in the “At the Edge of the Ice” and “Bluefish Caves” galleries may seem to support the Beringia Theory of human migration. However, I notice that nowhere in the posters or information descriptions do the authors of the texts suggest from where “the ancestors of modern First Peoples” came. Added to that, a large textual poster accompanies a glass box with a small ivory maskette in it. The maskette is a reproduction of the original, which dates to 3,900 to 3,600 years ago, and is about 5 cm tall, “one of the oldest depictions of a human face in North America.” Beside the maskette and the “At the Edge of the Ice” presentation is a prominently-displayed textual poster that states: “Scientific research and our own traditions confirm that we, the First



Peoples, have an ancient presence on this continent. We are not the first immigrants; we are the Native inhabitants of the land. We have been here since before the world took its present form.” As a learner at the CMH, I notice that the “Our Origins” Gallery acknowledges some findings from Eurocentric science, but this acknowledgement positions Indigenous Peoples not as immigrants (i.e., from the Bering Strait Migrations) but as indigenous to Turtle Island/North America. Considered together, the “At the Edge of the Ice” and “Bluefish Caves” galleries present a narrative of Indigenous history on Turtle Island that establish the great antiquity of Indigenous cultures on the continent.

While museum educators do acknowledge some of the findings of Western Archaeology, as I learned in the galleries, they situate the archaeological findings to demonstrate Indigenous presence on Turtle Island/North America from the earliest known calendar dates. Furthermore, after exiting the galleries that present narratives based on the findings of Western Archaeology, the museum guest moves through a gallery titled “Origin Stories” that features objects and artworks that narrate traditional stories about the origins of people on Turtle Island/North America. For example, one textual plaque in the “Origin Stories” Gallery teaches visitors that;

Stories carry knowledge from our ancestors into the present day. In the stories told by different Aboriginal peoples across Canada, Sky Woman, Glooscap, Sedna, Nanabush, or Raven create the world, or change it into the world known by human beings. Over the centuries, we have told these stories, sung them, carved them, painted them, and brought them to life through objects and dance. Today, origin stories are told in homes, schools and cultural centres. Artists, writers and actors interpret them for Aboriginal communities and the world. (Canadian Museum of History)

This textual instruction is followed in the gallery by a series of artworks featuring the beings mentioned in the above quote. The central wooden sculpture in this gallery depicts the descent of Sky Woman. Placed in front of a wall painting of stars, above a round

display of Turtle Island amid the sea, Sky Woman descends holding plants and seeds such as tobacco. Nearby, a 1982 steatite carving by Gwe-u'-gweh-o-no'/Cayuga artist Vincent Bomberly sits in a glass case. Entitled "The Birth of Good and Evil," the carving depicts the daughter of Sky Woman giving birth to her twin sons. On an adjoining wall, a plaque describing how many Indigenous Peoples of the Atlantic region, such as the Mi'kmaq, tell stories of Glooscap. Three traditional drawings surround the wall plaque, along with a painting and a cloth weaving titled "Mi'kmaq World View." Near these artworks, a 1974 ink-on-paper drawing by Gitksan artist Vernon Stephens, called "Raven Stealing the Sun," features Raven with humanlike proportions posed in front of a red, round image. In this gallery, Elders and scholars present traditional Indigenous narratives in relationship with archaeological narratives, and, based on their organization along the path of movement through the museum, Indigenous narratives offer the museum guest the final say about human origins on the continent. Giving traditional origin stories the final say in the order of the galleries suggests to me that they can act as exclamation points, moderating, qualifying, and re-framing the Western scientific narratives presented in some earlier galleries. They can remain freshest in the museum learner's recollection after leaving the gallery, claiming a central place among the diverse narratives presented in the museum.

Subsequent galleries in the CMH's First People's Hall each feature pre-European contact period culturally significant objects and historical narratives from different regions of what is now Canada. In these galleries, I continued to learn from Indigenous educators who constructed historical narratives that disrupt and exceed those based on Western cultural-evolutionary models. Here, educators iterated stories establishing long-

term cultural continuity despite extreme adversity brought about by colonial changes. The CMH's "Arctic Whalers" gallery features many culturally significant objects from Indigenous nations that developed technologies with which to hunt marine mammals and fish, such as a whalebone house, harpoon gear, and umiaks. Before the visitor leaves this section of the gallery, they are met with a niche in the wall in which the Indigenous educators have arranged a plaque, a display case, and a video screen. The niche is titled, "Maritime People Today." The plaque bears text from Wallace Labillois, Mi'kmaq Elder, New Brunswick, that reads,

We have survived Canada's assault on our identity and our rights...Our survival is a testament to our determination and will to survive as a people. We are prepared to participate in Canada's future-but only on the terms that we believe to be our rightful heritage. -Wallace Labillois, Mi'kmaq Elder, New Brunswick.

The plaque is flanked to the right by a glass case containing a lobster cage. An information card reveals that the cage is from Prince Edward Island and is made with wooden slats and nylon netting and cord. The plaque is flanked to the left by a TV screen with a brief video on contemporary court challenges to Maritime Indigenous Peoples' fishing rights. The niche and its contents taught me about the colonial assault on Mi'kmaq identity and rights. Beyond this, the museum's educators use culturally significant objects, in this case the lobster cage, to teach visitors in a palpable, physical way about the connections between contemporary Indigenous nations and the long-term history of fishing. They do this with textual, audio-visual, and physical representations that help to contextualize the collection of much older objects in the "Arctic Whalers" gallery as examples of continuous history from time immemorial to the present. One of my learnings here is that the gallery's educators challenge and disrupt a portrayal of

Indigenous history and culture as somehow moving along an evolutionary pathway of increasing cultural development. It portrays history not as a discrete, contained past, expressing a this-is-how-we-were picture that is finished with any kind of closure, in the way that many history textbooks tend to portray Indigenous histories. Instead, the lessons in this gallery connect Indigenous maritime fishers to Land, waters, and animals in a continuity that has experienced dramatic change wrought by colonial forces, yet attests to the endurance of Maritime Indigenous People's traditional cultural practices. The gallery's portrayal of cultural continuity and endurance belies colonial attempts to force Maritime Indigenous histories into cultural-evolutionary scheme. This endurance is iterated by Herbert Anungazuk, Inuit Elder, in an information card the museum guest sees as they exit the "Arctic Whalers" gallery. It reads, "The desire to whale was instilled into us by our forefathers. It continues today..." Herbert Anungazuk, Inuit Elder, from *Hunting the Largest Animals*.

After leaving the "Arctic Whalers" gallery at the CMH, the museum guest enters the "Communal Hunters" gallery featuring culturally significant objects from the Indigenous nations of the Great Plains. Here, the gallery's educators have arranged several objects that attest to the varied ways in which people interacted with the Land since long before European contact. Featured objects include stone spear points, a reconstruction of a fence bison pound used in hunting, tools for working hide and making pemmican, and various examples of clothing crafted from hides, among many other objects. A niche occupies a section of the wall at the end of this collection, just as one did after the "Arctic Whalers" gallery. This niche is titled "Collapse and Continuity," and, akin to the niche in the "Arctic Whalers" gallery, features three discrete learning centres including a wall plaque,

a glass case containing an object, and a video screen. The video screen flanks the wall plaque to its left, and is set to play a repeating video which features the collapse of bison populations on the Prairies and the continuing significance of the bison to contemporary Indigenous Peoples on the Great Plains. It is the plaque itself that narrates a central lesson on cultural continuity and colonial change:

Bison and caribou remain central to the world-views and cultures of many First Peoples. Caribou hunting continues to be the mainstay of many northern communities. However, economies based on bison hunting collapsed with the almost complete destruction of the herds in the late 1800s. Despite this, the bison remains an important symbol of Aboriginal identity. Today, the image of the bison is often found as a decorative feature on clothes, blankets, emblems, and various accessories...*“A cold wind blew across the prairie when the last buffalo fell...a death-wind for my people”* –Hunkpapa Sioux Chief Sitting Bull.

The glass case flanks the wall plaque to the right and features an 1873 Winchester rifle used by Nakoda peoples. The information card beside it reads, “The rifle symbolizes both the collapse and the continuity of a way of life. On the Plains, the firepower of the rifle led ultimately to the destruction of the buffalo herds. In the Subarctic, the rifle continues to be used to hunt caribou.” Much like the lobster trap in the “Arctic Whalers” niche, the rifle is an object, fabricated by colonial sources, but purposed by Indigenous Peoples to support traditional life ways. In the rifle, museum educators offer an explicit representation of how colonial objects have been used to inexorably alter Indigenous societies, in this case through the eradication of the bison. At the same time, the teaching in the plaque highlights the continuity through which some Indigenous Peoples use rifles to hunt game such as the caribou. The “Collapse and Continuity” niche attests to the coexistence of cultural change as wrought by colonialism, and the long-term continuity of bison- and caribou-hunting by Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island’s Great Plains. The

Elders' and scholar's teachings at the CMH highlight the continuity of important aspects of traditional cultures despite the imposition of colonial change. Their teaching exemplifies Lyons' argument that the purposing of colonial tools and signs by Indigenous Peoples is not the opposite of Indigeneity. He points out that, "The thing to do is not protest the claim that a Native writer or culture evidences hybridity, but simply to point out the continuity that carries forth nonetheless" (2010, p. 157). The teachings of the Indigenous Elders and scholars at the CMH stand in direct opposition to Eurocentric and colonial notions of Indigenous cultural change as being measurable on a scale of social development in which a culture "progresses" from so-called savagery, to so-called barbarism, and ultimately to Western-defined state level civilizations.

The "Peoples of the Longhouse" gallery runs along the opposite side of the hallway from the "Communal Hunters" gallery. Here, the museum guest interacts with the culturally significant objects from Haudenosaunee nations. Featured objects include assortments of hide clothing, stone, bone and wooden agricultural tools, pottery and ceramic vessels, corn husk mats, a wampum belt, and a reconstruction of the exterior of a longhouse doorway. At the end of this section of the gallery, as in the previous ones, gallery educators have positioned a niche in the wall at which the guest experiences three learning centres. This niche is titled "Keeping the Fire Burning," and, akin to the niches in the previous two galleries, it features a wall plaque, a glass case with a culturally significant object, and a video screen. The video screen features a repeating program called "Clan Mothers of Oka," which focuses on the role of women during the Oka Crisis. On the right side of the wall plaque in this niche sits a glass case which contains a 1996 ceramic vase by the noted Haudenosaunee artist Leigh Smith. The vessel's information

card indicates that the item "...shows Sky Woman surrounded by corn stalks. This design by a contemporary Six Nations artist illustrates the continuing importance of corn in the collective identity of Iroquoian people today." The video and the vase accentuate a main teaching of the "Peoples of the Longhouse" gallery, which powerfully connects the deep history and traditions of Haudenosaunee nations to contemporary peoples. In particular, the roles of corn and especially of women are centred as stabilizing and long-term sources of continuity. This is effectively illustrated in the central wall plaque in the niche;

#### Keeping the Fire Burning

The traditional life of the Iroquoian peoples has changed dramatically in the last 400 years as a result of warfare, disease and the encroachment of non-Native settlers. These events...have greatly affected the economic basis of today's Iroquoian societies. However, people have steadfastly maintained key traditional values, including a strong attachment to the land, and a social structure based on clans and female lineage.

The Three Sisters-corn, beans, and squash-continue to nurture the spirit and the body, and still have a central place in the world-view of Iroquoian peoples. Women continue to play a major role in Iroquoian societies.

Longhouses continue to be a part of Iroquoian life. Although no longer residential units, they still provide a focus for ceremonies, celebrations and political debate...

The offering in the "Keeping the Fire Burning" plaque teach me about the dynamics of both the forces of change and continuity. As in the lessons established in the previous niches, cultural change is identified as a response to colonialism. Even in such narratives of change, museum educators nonetheless retain Indigenous sovereignty by emphasizing the agency of Indigenous communities to use colonial tools for their own purposes. Still, the maintenance of traditional life ways including the Three Sisters and Longhouses, and the centrality of women in Haudenosaunee societies, are emphasized as sources of stabilizing continuity through tumultuous colonial change. These teachings are effectively highlighted in the culturally significant object chosen for the niche. Smith's

vase anchors these themes in an object that continues to narrate their importance, educate diverse publics, and firmly connect historical and contemporary Haudenosaunee peoples.

The final gallery the CMH guest moves through that features deep history themes is one titled “Trade Fairs.” It is a reconstruction of a social and economic exchange between Mandan and Assiniboiné peoples from Turtle Island’s Great Plains. The Trade Fair presents a wide variety of items that would have been exchanged between peoples who congregated at traditional gatherings, including blankets, hide mats and clothing items, foodstuffs such as pottery vessels filled with corn, shell beads, clay pipes, wooden and stone tools, and animal furs. As with the previous galleries, the “Trade Fairs” collection concludes with a niche containing three learning centres, the central piece being a wall plaque flanked by a video screen and a glass case containing culturally significant objects. The niche is titled, “Trade Today,” and like the other niches throughout the First Peoples Hall, it firmly connects historical Mandan and Assiniboiné Peoples with their contemporary descendants. The video screen plays a repeating program called “Pow-Wows,” which highlights the contemporary significance of Pow-wows and their diverse functions. The glass case contains a collection of items that might typically have belonged to a young girl. They consist of a dress top (Nakoda, 1900-1910, velvet and cotton fabric), leggings (Nakoda, 1907, tanned leather, cotton, fabric, glass beads...), moccasins (Nakoda, 1883-1887, smoked deer hide, glass beads, wool and silk ribbon...), and a female pow-wow doll (Nakoda, 1972, smoked deer hide, glass beads, wool yarn, feather, red ink). Here, I notice two things. First, the collection of culturally significant objects is dated to the late 1800s and early 1900s (save for the doll), and are used to give the visitor an indication of the kinds of objects that might be worn and brought to a trade



fair. Their association as such, and their being dated to just over a century ago, may indicate that the gallery educators are suggesting that objects from this time period can accurately reflect the kinds of objects that were worn at trade fairs since before European contact.

Second, I notice that the objects were fashioned with some types of materials that became available after European contact, such as glass beads and silk ribbon. The incorporation of these objects speaks to some of the ways that Nakoda peoples maintained cultural continuity while adapting different kinds of materials, put to the service of crafting traditional clothing and toys. It is the central wall plaque which, like those in the other niches, communicates the gallery educators' intentions behind the teachings;

The Euro-American fur trade and modern commerce gradually replaced ancient trade patterns. Since World War II, Aboriginal celebratory gatherings have become popular again. The modern pow-wow, for example, is a festival combining traditional and contemporary customs. Although drumming and dancing are now the main focus, trade remains an associated activity.

In 2002, there were hundreds of pow-wows across North America, attracting tens of thousands of people. Large pow-wows are attended by people from all over the continent.

"We thank the creator for bringing us together to celebrate the good ways." (An Elder speaking at a 2001 pow-wow).

The "Trade Fairs" gallery's culturally significant objects tell stories of the work behind gathering and organizing many and diverse items, and of the items' roles in the cooperation and interaction between groups of people. The wall plaque concluding the gallery lays bare one of the teachings of the gallery. The information expressly highlights the continuity between trade fairs of the past and contemporary pow-wows. Once again, the gallery educators articulate the changes wrought on Indigenous Peoples by colonial

forces, in this case the fur trade and modern commerce. At the same time, they also emphasize the cultural continuity in modern pow-wows, which combine “traditional and contemporary customs” including drumming, dancing and trade. In the “Trade Fairs” gallery, museum educators weave a complex narrative which challenges Western Eurocentric notions of “civilizations,” one component of which is “merchants and trade” (Newman et. al., 2001, p. 36). However, despite the complex and multi-faceted articulation of trade ceremonies among the Mandan and Assiniboiné Peoples demonstrated in the CMH, gallery educators in no way frame these historical narratives as forces which helped to “propel” Indigenous nations along a hierarchy of cultural complexity towards a cultural-evolutionary ideal such as a “state civilization.” Neither are they used to compare Mandan or Assiniboiné societies to others in an inherently competitive ranking scheme that positions some cultures as more “advanced” than others.

Indigenous educators in the CMH galleries that focus on deep histories arranged culturally significant objects to tell complex stories of fishing rights and traditions, bison and caribou hunting, agricultural practices and roles of women, and social gatherings and trade economics, among many other themes. In each case, gallery educators sought to underscore the collections of objects with concluding niches that firmly link contemporary Indigenous Peoples with their pre-European contact ancestors. The CMH gallery’s educators have arranged a series of lessons that teach history from a perspective that stands in stark contrast to the Western cultural-evolutionary narratives found in history curriculum. Absent here, as in the other galleries, are any references to evolutionary terminology like barbarism and civilization. Absent here is any portrayal of Indigenous societies “progressing” through evolutionary stages from a perceived “less

complex” to a perceived “more advanced” status. Absent here is any indication that Indigenous teachers characterize culture in terms of discrete factors that position it nearer or farther from a Western ideal of improvement through time. In light of these teachings, portraying Indigenous histories and cultures through a social-Darwinian cultural-evolutionary model leads students in Ontario schools to rate and rank cultures against a Eurocentric measuring stick. To teach histories in Ontario classrooms from the perspectives of cultural-evolution and perceived social advancement is to perpetuate a colonial violence that Indigenous educators disrupt in museum galleries. The elimination of such devices in history curriculum can represent one step towards the decolonizing of our teaching practice.

### **Cultural Continuity and Colonial-wrought Change at the OCF**

Anishinaabe museum educators at the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation have arranged educational galleries for diverse publics that powerfully establish the long-term cultural continuity of Anishinaabe history. Following the design of the gallery’s space in a counter-clockwise direction, past the glass cases with quillwork boxes, the visitor first encounters a poster which introduces the museum’s space devoted to teachings about Anishinaabe clans. The poster is titled “G-Doodeminaanig: Our Traditional Clans.” After defining clans, the poster teaches us that “The Clan system provided community leadership and ensured groups would be responsible for basic needs such as food, protection, medicine, spirituality and traditional teachings for all Anishinaabeg.” The poster goes on to explain under the heading “The Importance of Clans,” that “The Anishinaabeg believed clans were a gift from the Creator and were part of their being. This strong belief in the significance of clans led to the historic practice of marking

important petitions and treaties with their clan symbol as a mark of identity.” Finally, under the heading “Our Clans Today,” the poster notes that “Today the influence of the clan system has diminished, but there remain traditional people in our communities who still follow their clan duties. Due to their efforts, the clan system will remain an important part of our cultural revitalization.” Two small walls of the Clans Gallery hold a map of the Great Lakes area, and label many Anishinaabe communities around the shorelines of the lakes. They list many family names and prominent clans associated with these communities, which include Wikwemikong, Manitowaning, M’Chigeeng, Shesheganing, and many others. One of the final posters in the Clans Gallery shares a brief summary titled, “The Origin Story,” which notes that the Creator “asked various animals to change form and become an Anishinaabeg or Anishinaabeg-kwe and marry one of the original children...Successive marriages...resulted in the creation of the clans named after the animal spirits.” Here I note that the gallery’s teachers instruct us that clans, as gifts of the Creator, have existed since time immemorial. With their reference to the contemporary influence and significance of clans, the teachers firmly establish the continued existence of clans as exemplars of ways in which Anishinaabe culture has maintained continuity through time. This teaching rests in direct opposition to colonial notions of cultural-evolution, and problematizes Western attempts to characterize Anishinaabe culture as occupying a place on a ranked and hierarchical scale of social development.

### **Cultural Continuity at the NMAI, Washington D.C.**

In the gallery dedicated to Anishinaabe history and culture at the NMAI, Washington D.C., community educators teach history as a culturally sustaining force rather than as an

agent of cultural change. They teach from perspectives centring historical continuity not only through the use of a selection of culturally significant objects, but by organizing the gallery's large glass case into a narrative that centres both women's and men's traditional roles. An examination of the gallery dedicated to Anishinaabe history and culture helped me to understand ways in which Anishinaabe educators can implicitly resist and challenge the cultural-evolutionary models of history that remain entrenched in Western curriculum.

Upon entering the "Our Universes" exhibition in the NMAI, the guest encounters a wall plaque that explains the purposes of the exhibition. The plaque is entitled, "Our Universes: Traditional Knowledge Shapes Our World" (NMAI). It informs the guest that,

In this gallery, you'll discover how Native people understand their place in the universe and order their daily lives. Our philosophies of life come from our ancestors...Native people from the Western Hemisphere...continue to express this wisdom in ceremonies, celebrations, languages, arts, religions, and daily life (Emil Her Many Horses, NMAI, 2003).

From the quotation on the plaque, I notice that Emil Her Many Horses emphasizes that the knowledges in the exhibition come from the ancestors of the Indigenous educators who organized the galleries. Further, I notice that Emil Her Many Horses stresses the fact that Indigenous Peoples "...continue to express this wisdom in ceremonies, celebrations, languages, arts, religions, and daily life" (Emil Her Many Horses, NMAI, 2003). In the way that I read the plaque, the welcoming quote both accentuates the myriad of ways that Indigenous Peoples celebrate and express the wisdom passed down from the ancestors, and it serves to frame and contextualize the information about which the guest is preparing to learn.

In the gallery dedicated to Anishinaabe history and culture, the gallery designers

positioned a large glass case between the drawings of the story of “Little Boy and the Seven Teachings,” and the poster-plaques of the Seven Grandfather Teachings discussed in the previous chapter. The glass case is subdivided into 5 distinct sections, with each section featuring a textual-and-graphic plaque in the foreground, labelling and explaining the scenes in the background. The background scenes consist of 7 artificial human-like figures dressed in an array of traditional clothing and who are in the process of carrying out a variety of traditional tasks. The figures are surrounded by, and engaging with, a wide assortment of culturally significant objects associated with the tasks being enacted.

Moving from left to right, as the museum guest approaches the case after encountering the drawings of Little Boy and the Seven Teachings, they engage with the first subsection of the case, entitled “Women’s Roles.” A central caption teaches the guest that, “Women are the carriers of life. When you go back in history, everything that was passed on for us to practice as traditional people-the drum, the pipe-it was always to the woman that it was handed down. We have to respect them. (Mark Thompson, 2000).” From Elder Mark Thompson, I am reminded that many Anishinaabe traditions are passed down by women through deep history. I notice that in the caption, Elder Mark Thompson not only centres the roles of women in that continuity, but avoids truncating that continuity through the imposition of calendar dates, or fitting Anishinaabe culture into developmental stages. The historical continuity shared here indicates/implies an extension from time immemorial to the present. Augmenting/cementing the extension of historical continuity to the present is the Elder’s practice of using the present tense, as in, “Women *are* the carriers of life” (emphasis added) (Elder Mark Thompson, 2000). On the plaque, the community educators had printed on either side of the central caption two smaller

captions, one entitled “Young Girl” and the other, “Adult Female.” In the “Adult Female” caption, Elder Garry Raven notes that, “Adult women pass along their knowledge of harvesting and preserving food, cooking...making clothes and utensils, and the painstaking art of bead-and-quillwork. (Garry Raven, 2000).” Above the captions, community educators have had textual descriptions printed on the plaque that provide information about the 15 culturally significant objects featured in this subsection of the case. Some of the articles of clothing adorn the 3 artificial human-like figures in this subsection, including a girl and a woman, with the woman being depicted tending to an infant. Other objects surround the figures on the floor, decorated to simulate the interior of a lodge. The objects date to between 1890 and 1940, and include 2 beaded capes, 2 pairs of leggings, 2 pairs of moccasins, a belt, a doll, 2 baskets labelled as food storage items, 3 boxes (2 made of birch bark and quills, the other of reeds), a bag, and a fan. Unlabelled objects include a clay pot holding blueberries and another pot, covered by a lid, with a utensil’s handle emerging from under the lid. In this section of the glass case, community educators reinforce the historical teachings from the captions with culturally significant objects. The objects, arranged in-situ among the female figures, exist in contexts of relationships and traditional roles.

The next subsection of the glass case features 20 culturally significant objects associated with food preparation, and its plaque’s central caption is entitled “Foods and Feasting.” As in the previous subsection, 2 shorter captions flank the central caption. The one to the left is entitled “Child,” and teaches the guest that “Babies are born with wisdom and that true innocence that we lose as we go through life. Babies teach us many things. (Wilson Scott, 2000).” The right-side caption is entitled “Elder Female,” and

teaches that “Many elder women are healers, knowledgeable in finding and using herbal medicines. They take part in many of the same sacred rituals as men and share responsibility for passing along traditional ways. (Conrad Spence, 2000).” In situating historical teachings through information captions and then demonstrating how those teachings are manifested through arrangements of culturally significant objects, the community educators effectively exemplify ways that relationships act as conduits through which historical continuity is maintained.

The conduits of historical continuity are further illustrated in the final subsection of the glass case. Here, a caption entitled “Men’s Roles” teaches guests that, “...men pass along their knowledge of hunting, fishing, combat, lodge building, and other skills. Through stories, songs, and demonstrations, they remind their sons and other young men of their responsibilities as husbands and fathers. (Garry Raven, 2000).” Like Elder Conrad Spence’s teachings about women’s traditional roles, Elder Garry Raven situates men’s teachings in the context of cultural continuity from one generation to the next. Further, the educational aspect of those relationships is manifested through the culturally significant objects arrayed around the male human-like figures, including a drum, bags, vessels containing sacred medicines, a model of a canoe, and a variety of gaming pieces.

From the NMAI’s gallery dedicated to Anishinaabe history, I learn how history can be taught with culturally significant objects in ways that centre traditional gender roles while using present-tense language to emphasize long-term historical continuity. Accentuating the continuity of Anishinaabe history in this way can constitute one method of challenging the power structures inherent in the colonial violence perpetrated by the teaching of cultural-evolutionary models of history. The community educators utilize



culturally significant objects to narrate hi(stories) of gendered relationships rooted in the continuity of teaching-and-learning. The operative, functional scenes depicted here stand in stark contrast to many of the arrangements I have seen in other museums, which often place objects side by side with other objects of the same type of category, situated in a linear progression that seeks to demonstrate an evolution of the object through time.

### **Cultural Continuity at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture**

As I moved through galleries at the MOC, I encountered a series of glass cases that housed some of the museums objects dating back into deep historical periods. Their arrangement, in juxtaposition with more contemporary objects, provided further education on the ways in which notions of cultural continuity superseded notions of cultural-evolutionism in the museums, the latter notions being absent from this museum. In the first gallery room of the MOC, educators have organized a series of 6 glass cases, each about a metre and a half tall and about half a metre wide, that contain diverse collections of culturally significant objects. The cases are largely organized according to the themes of the objects contained therein. The first and second cases the guest encounters when entering the museum are not titled, but they contain an assortment of reed baskets. The first case contains a strawberry basket, or “Heart Basket” and a “Blueberry Basket” (MOC). Both baskets were crafted to resemble the berries that they are named for. The second glass case contains 4 shelves. The topmost shelf bears 2 round, porcupine quill work boxes, the lid of one crafted with a depiction of 5 flowers, and the lid of the other bears a fox motif. The second shelf holds 3 small quill work boxes. One bears an eagle’s head in profile on its lid, another similarly depicts a hawk’s head, and the third, a six-pointed star. On the case’s third shelf, museum educators have placed 2

examples of ceramic pottery jars dating to times before European contact. The shelf's information label tells the guest that they are examples of "Blackduck Pottery...The Blackduck Culture lived in the Midwest during...800 to 1400 A.D....archaeologists have found...their pottery throughout Northwest Michigan" (MOC). The lowest shelf in the case holds 2 unlabeled examples of contemporary reed baskets. The reed baskets are round and are similar in shape to the Blackduck Pottery. In this glass case, I notice that museum educators have situated contemporary quill work and reed baskets with pre-contact period ceramic containers. While these vessels may be used for different purposes, they are positioned in the same case and are presented as belonging to the same collection. In the process of arranging these containers together, the educators make implicit the statement that Indigenous Peoples crafted containers of various materials from periods of deep historical time to the present day. Positioning the containers from different time periods together teaches the guest about the long-term continuity of the practice of manufacturing these kinds of containers with locally derived materials.

A similar glass case in the same section of the gallery as the first cases is entitled "Working with Animals" (MOC). The topmost shelf in this glass case has an information card that describes "Making Moccasins" (MOC). It briefly describes the parts of deer and elk that are used in the process. Arrayed on the shelf and labeled are a "Leather moccasin blank, for sewing," "Rabbit fur for lining," "Bone needles and awls," and "sinew" (MOC). The second shelf supports an example of a finished "Adult partridge moccasin," named for "...the resemblance of their puckered toes to the tail feathers of a partridge" (MOC). The third shelf bears a group of 5 necklaces made from a variety of items including whitefish vertebrae and bear claws. The lowermost shelf shows the guest an assortment

of fifteen gaming pieces made from bone and leather materials. Although these items are undated, the information cards make it clear that these are traditionally made items, and they teach the guest about Anishinaabe People's long-term relationships with the animals from which the items are made.

The last glass case in the first gallery room is entitled "Working with Earth's Resources" and contains a collection of objects from the time before European contact. The items on the first shelf includes a hammer stone and antler pieces for crafting stone tools, as well as seventeen stone tools, labeled as "Chert Cobbles and Flakes" (MOC). The associated information card reads, "Long before they encountered Europeans and their trade goods, the Ojibwa...looked to the natural resources around them to fulfill their needs..." and "Long before Europeans introduced brass and iron objects...the Ojibwa...used stones and animal bones to create tools and other useful implements" (MOC). The second shelf in the case contains twenty-four "Blades, Tools, and Weapons" (MOC) made of bone and stone including projectile points and harpoons. In the third level of the case, 4 stone and copper items sit. The information card is entitled "Working Copper," and teaches that "Perhaps 7,000 years ago, indigenous people started making useful objects with copper mined in the Keweenaw Peninsula and on Isle Royale..." (MOC). The card describes how Indigenous Peoples mined copper out of the ground and then shaped and worked it with other tools.

Some concluding thoughts occurred to me in this gallery. The first was that, from what I was taught in my colonial education, the presence of mining technology iterated here was among the hallmarks of Eurocentric definitions of "civilization."<sup>27</sup> My second line of

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<sup>27</sup> I do not mean here to imply that Anishinaabe societies should be considered "civilizations" according to

thought, as I considered the different glass cases holistically, was that, as I noted in the case with Blackduck Pottery, the educators present a wide variety of culturally significant objects together, and they range in time from 7,000 years ago to the present. Not only were calendar dates rarely used,<sup>28</sup> but the educators eschewed arranging the items in historical sequences. Educators did not use the objects to narrate cultural change from supposedly less-advanced to supposedly more-advanced states. Educators did not organize the objects to divide history into distinct time periods according to technological innovations visible in the archaeological record. The information cards the educators authored did, however, connect contemporary examples of various handiworks to their much more ancient equivalents. The juxtaposition of newer and much older items established a narrative of very long-term continuity, particularly in the areas of Anishinaabe People's relationships with traditional foods, animals, and the Earth's resources such as stone and copper.

Considering all of the museums I visited holistically, I learned that there are diverse ways in which Indigenous educators centered narratives of cultural continuity in their articulation of historical narratives. In all of the museums, educators employed a variety of methods. In listing a few of them that stood out at each particular museum, as I did in the previous chapter, I do not mean to reduce those methods to one or two applications. Rather, I point out the methods and foci that stood out to me as a guest, interacting with the galleries from my own position/bias and background. At the CMH, Indigenous educators centered long-term cultural continuity in the "Our Origins" gallery, which

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the Eurocentric cultural-evolutionary scale. This notion is racist and colonial. I make reference to it here to suggest the double standard with which colonial anthropologists and historians treat non-Western societies.

<sup>28</sup> The only calendar dates I saw were the ones labeling the Blackduck Pottery between 800 and 1400 A.D., and the date of the copper item at about 7,000 years ago.

stood in contraposition to a small section devoted to archaeological stories of Indigenous origins. Additionally, Elders and scholars at the CMH utilized learning centers that taught about cultural continuity and colonial change using culturally significant objects, video presentations set on playback, and central information posters which contextualized their teachings. At the OCF, educators teach museum guests about long-term cultural continuity through wall murals in which Anishinaabe Clans are featured as stabilizing family and social units extending from time immemorial. At the NMAI, Washington D.C., I learned about long-term continuity in Anishinaabe histories in the Our Universes gallery, in which educators implemented gallery scenes featuring traditional gender roles and the educational roles men and women play in teaching youths. Finally, at the MOC I learned how Anishinaabe educators emphasized long-term cultural continuity by juxtaposing contemporary examples of culturally significant objects with much more ancient ones to demonstrate the enduring relationships between Anishinaabe Peoples and the plants, animals and minerals of the Places in which they continue to thrive. The methodologies with which Indigenous educators taught guests about cultural continuity are not only diverse, they also challenge dominant methodologies that prioritize positivist scientific presuppositions. As I moved to different sections of the museum galleries, I learned about other ways through which Indigenous educators disrupt colonial narratives, including one based on nineteenth- and twentieth-century frameworks that have come to be known as the salvage paradigm. It is to my learning in these areas that I now turn.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### “Art” vs. “Artifact” and the Salvage Paradigm

In the last few chapters, I have explored how, in my experience teaching history, I have noticed that curriculum narratives of Indigenous history have usually been structured on historical-chronological frameworks. Additionally, I have discussed how curriculum writers often use those chronological frameworks to position Indigenous cultures at points along a Eurocentric cultural-evolutionary pathway, and how Indigenous educators teaching history in museum contexts challenge and disrupt this lineage. In this chapter, I examine a different, but related framework, which historians and archaeologists also have a long history of implementing. Curriculum writers similarly draw on this framework to structure Indigenous histories in school resources. Scholars have referred to this framework as the salvage paradigm, a paradigm that has led Western scholars to identify marked distinctions between terms like “art” and “artifact” in representing Indigenous histories for largely Western audiences (Clifford, 1989, Gruber, 1970, Whitelaw, 2006). Through my teaching experience, it seems to me that curriculum authors implicitly rely on the salvage paradigm and the art/artifact distinction to marginalize Indigenous histories and cast them, in history curriculum, in ways that serve colonial goals.

The academy is fraught with debates about how the terms “art” and “artifact/artefact” should be defined (Dippert, 1986, Dutton, 1993, Renfrew and Bahn, 1991). Many Western disciplines utilize an inconsistent binary distinction between the terms “art” and “artifact.” While the contrast between these terms suggests a discernable binary distinction, the practice of assigning an object to one or the other category can be

contentious and relies on the specific definitions of the terms as outlined in a discipline or a text. I have noticed that many Western sources/scholars subsume the term “art” or “art work” in a sub-category of “artifact.” However, other Western sources/scholars suggest a difference between the terms, which school curriculum writers then inherit and replicate in educational supplementary texts. Based on my university education in History and Archaeology, and upon my experience as a teacher using textbooks that support Western knowledge systems, it seems to me that when scholars do distinguish between “art” and “artifact,” the distinction is enacted to reinforce the colonial mindset and presuppositions inherent in the salvage paradigm. For example, academic archaeologists often define the term “artifact” as a “humanly made or modified portable object” (Renfrew and Bahn, 1991, p. 41). A broad definition like this would include objects usually considered as works of art, such as paintings or sculptures. However, as I will demonstrate, many scholars make distinctions between “artifacts” and “art” based on the object’s intended purposes and on aesthetic features, and school textbook authors reproduce these distinctions.

In the context of the inconsistent distinction between the terms, the word “artifact” often refers to objects that have primarily functional, utilitarian purposes, while the word “art” often refers to objects that are created to express or illicit aesthetic responses in their makers and/or users/viewers (see discussion below). As I will argue, asserting the distinction between “art” and “artifact” in school curriculum serves to replicate the colonial logics of the salvage paradigm. A study of Ontario curriculum documents and its supplementary resources demonstrates that Western scholars have often categorized Indigenous objects they refer to as “artifacts” as scientifically knowable items acceptable

for constructing Indigenous histories. Contrastingly, scholars have often categorized Indigenous objects they refer to as “art” as appropriate for being judged for their aesthetic features, often against a Western standard (Genia, 2019, pp. 32-33). Both categorizations in curriculum serve to perpetuate the salvage paradigm. The categorization of objects as “artifacts” perpetuates the salvage paradigm by isolating objects from the contemporary Indigenous descendant societies of which they are parts (Younging, 2018, pp. 52-53), and situating them as “relics” of extinct life ways. The categorization of objects as “art” perpetuates the salvage paradigm by similarly isolating objects from the contemporary Indigenous descendant societies of which they are parts, and situating them as aesthetic objects judged by Western standards and put on display for the “fascinated and knowing gaze of the West, as they are explained and made sensible, like puppets, by their learned presenters” (Willinsky, 1998, p. 61). In this chapter, it is not my intention to contribute to this overall debate. Rather, I attempt to identify and explore how the salvage paradigm and associated terminology like “art/artifact” have historically been utilized in, and have helped to frame, Indigenous history curriculum for Ontario’s students, and how teachers have used these concepts in ways that advance the ongoing colonial project. Additionally, I seek to learn how Indigenous educators might challenge and/or disrupt these frameworks in museum contexts, which will help me to continue learning how I might modify the ways in which I teach history to resist replicating colonial narratives and power structures.

### **The Salvage Paradigm**

The salvage paradigm is a framework in which many anthropologists operated, especially working in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Clifford, 1989, p.



73). At that time, many anthropologists and archaeologists subscribed to the notion that Indigenous cultures were becoming extinct and that Western scholars had to thoroughly document those cultures to “preserve” them. The salvage paradigm frames “artifacts” made by Indigenous Peoples as different and “exotic” from their European typological counterparts, and usually frames the objects as “less advanced” along a so-called cultural-evolutionary pathway. Whitelaw (2006) notes that the salvage paradigm was:

...a means of capturing the belief at the turn of the twentieth century that the vestiges of pre-contact "primitive" societies needed to be preserved as artifacts of the *most authentic period of non-Western cultures' existence*...While there was little desire to ensure the survival of the human members of such cultures, great care was taken to safeguard the *more elaborate and significant objects these members produced*. (p. 202, emphasis added)

In this quote, Whitelaw exposes the tendency of colonial scholars to construct objects made by Indigenous Peoples as if representing the “most authentic period of non-Western cultures' existence” (p. 202). I understand this to imply that objects with which Western archaeologists thought that they could most successfully “know,” access, or reconstruct Indigenous histories and cultures were those objects that most differed from their European typological counterparts, and therefore seemed more exotic and thus ‘authentic.’ One example of this is how various styles of stone arrowheads serve as a stylistic difference from Western steel arrowheads, or how traditional Haudenosaunee cord-marked pottery serves as a stylistic difference from Western steel pots. I understand from Whitelaw’s assertion that Western authorities sought to “safeguard the more elaborate and significant objects these members produced” (2006, p. 202). In one of the most famous examples of non-Indigenous people attempting to “capture” images of Indigenous cultures for a supposedly impending posterity, Edward Curtis took hundreds

of photographs between the 1890s and 1930, for which he staged scenes of Indigenous Peoples wearing regalia that was not authentic to their societies (Curtis, 1972, King, 2003, pp. 32-33). As Don D. Fowler asserts in the Introduction of a 1972 book of Curtis' photos, "Curtis noted that his work 'represents the result of a personal study of a people who are rapidly losing the traces of the aboriginal character and who are destined ultimately to become assimilated...'" (Curtis, 1972, p. 13). Curtis' efforts exemplified the Western proclivity to "imagine" Indigenous cultures and histories that conformed to colonial ideas of how a supposedly "vanishing" people should appear. From my experiences teaching history, I can discern that there is a similar narrative underlying history curriculum that focuses on Indigenous Peoples. Western curriculum writers draw from archaeology steeped in historical-chronological and cultural-evolutionary frameworks to "imagine" and construct Indigenous histories that conform to themes perpetuated in the salvage paradigm.

In narratives of Indigenous history in curriculum resources, references to "artifacts" like stone tools and potsherds abound (Brinkley, 2015, Newman et. al., 2001, Roberts, 2006). From a Western archaeological perspective, students are taught that it is through archaeological artifacts, "authentic," excavated, dated, classified, and scientifically measured and analyzed, that Western experts can successfully discern Indigenous histories appropriate for public education. To construct histories in this way, historians and archaeologists must assess "art," "artifacts," and "more elaborate and significant objects" that they argue represent the "most authentic period of [the] non-Western cultures' existence" (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202). Culturally significant objects emphasized for this purpose usually attest to life ways that are no longer practiced, or at least those

which have been heavily modified by colonization. As noted, one example of this framework is how archaeologists often prioritize stone tool manufacture and use as a hallmark of Indigenous deep history and culture. In this way, a “salvage paradigm” orients Western historical narratives that authors manifest in education curriculum. Objects deemed by Western ‘authorities’ to be representative of an “authentic” aspect of Indigenous culture usually conform to those qualifiers lauded by practitioners of archaeological science, such as being directly observable in the archaeological record. Not too coincidentally, it is these objects that also conform to Western ideals of the “most authentic period of [the] non-Western cultures' existence” (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202).

Through my teaching experience, I have observed both subtle and overt distinctions in curriculum between culturally significant objects which are labelled as “artifacts,” and those which are labelled as “art.” The distinction in Western curriculum, I suggest here, serves colonial ends in several ways. First, it elevates some objects (“artifacts”) to the status of being acceptable by archaeologists to be studied scientifically and therefore used to identify and construct what they might call “accurate” Indigenous histories. Second, it relegates other culturally significant objects (“art”) to a lesser status, based primarily on their value to Western scholars as aesthetically pleasing or esoteric cultural expressions, but whose artistic interpretations are not scientifically quantifiable. In both appropriations of culturally significant objects, colonial curriculum writers risk dissociating them from their original cultural contexts and interpreting their significance to serve colonial history-making ends, thus contributing to the Western proclivity to “imagine authentic” Indigenous histories. Third, making distinctions between “artifacts” and “art,” and furthermore constructing histories based in part on these distinctions, replicates the

colonial logics at work in the salvage paradigm. Such a practice manifests the salvage paradigm by positioning Indigenous culturally significant objects, whether in “artistic” or “artifactual” capacities as indicators of “...the most authentic period of non-Western cultures' existence...” (Whitehall, 2006, p. 202). A brief examination of how the terms “art” and “artifact” are used in the academic discipline of archaeology and in curriculum will help to contextualize my research in the museum galleries.

### **“Art” vs. “Artifact” in the Academy**

Earlier I discussed the term “artifact” and how, through its use, historians and archaeologists risk marginalizing Indigenous cultures. I have instead used the term “culturally significant object,” but will make mention of the term “artifact” in this section to indicate the use of the term in the field of Archaeology and in history curriculum. Of the term “artifact,” Younging (2018) asserts that:

This term is commonly used in...archaeology, and art history to refer to artworks and functional objects produced by Indigenous Peoples. The etymological *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) has two definitions for *artifact* relevant to its use for Indigenous cultural objects...The second is specifically from archaeology: “an excavated object that shows characteristic signs of human workmanship or use.” Both definitions are problematic in Indigenous contexts...The second definition risks stripping [objects] of their connection to the present: it can be interpreted to mean that ancient Indigenous artworks, for example, are remnants of the past and disassociated from the contemporary members of an Indigenous People. (pp. 52-53)

Here I notice that Younging uses the term “artifact” to refer to both “artworks and functional objects” (2028, p. 52). Younging’s assessment offers a basis from which to interrogate the use of the term “artifact” in history curriculum, to help explore the ways that use of the term in curriculum resources risks dissociating culturally significant objects from contemporary Indigenous cultures. Randall Dippert was a professor of

Philosophy who devoted part of his studies to exploring the ideas of “art” vs. “artifact.”

He concluded that:

art works must be artifacts... It would be better to say that in order to be regarded (function) as an art work, an object must be regarded as an artifact. So long as the object is regarded as a natural object, produced by natural processes, it remains a possible aesthetic object in the broader sense; but when it is regarded as an artifact, it then has the potential to be regarded as an art work... to regard an object as a work of art is (1) to regard it as an artifact and (2) to approach it with the right attitude---the aesthetic attitude. (1986, pp. 401-402)

From Dippert, I understand that the concept of what constitutes an “art work” necessarily falls under the wider category of items that constitute “artifacts.” Here, Dippert seems to be relying on the broader definitions of “artifact” upon which Archaeologists and Anthropologists also rely. For example, Anthropology professor Robert J. Wenke suggests that “artifacts” are “things that owe any of their physical characteristics or their place in space to human activity” (1990, p. 39). This broad definition of “artifacts” includes all things that have been modified by human hands, including works of art. However, this definition fails to account for the ways in which the idea of “artifact” has been used to dissociate cultural objects produced by Indigenous Peoples from their communities. It also conforms to the Western proclivity to strip objects down to their essential qualities, those observable through the scientific method. Finally, relevant to my research is Dippert’s assertion that, as a sub-category of “artifact,” what differentiates “art works” from other kinds of artifacts requires that people approach art with “the aesthetic attitude” (1986, p. 402). My understanding of the Western differentiation of “artifact” and “art” is that, in academic archaeology, notions of objects as “art” tend to rely on visual, aesthetic qualities, while other, “non-art” “artifacts” remain those objects that are produced through human agency and are valued for their “physical

characteristics” (Wenke, 1990, p. 39) and can be analyzed through the scientific method. I have noticed that these distinctions are: a) reinforced and amplified in academic archaeology; b) are utilized by history curriculum writers to uphold stereotypical Indigenous histories for Ontario’s students; and c) continue to replicate colonial power structures by conforming to salvage paradigm narratives of Indigenous histories that position Indigenous cultures as “vanishing.”

In their university level introductory Archaeology textbook, Renfrew and Bahn (1991) define “artifact” by stating that “*Artifacts* are humanly made or modified portable objects, such as stone tools, pottery, and metal weapons” (p. 41, emphasis in original). Although their definition is general, in that it could include a work of esoteric art, the examples the authors use to illustrate the definition rely on those objects that have mechanical, functional purposes. Further, their identification and treatment of the concept of “art” used in historical and archaeological discourses suggests that the study of the aesthetic qualities of “art” do much to disqualify it from being appropriate for positivist, scientific archaeological study. Renfrew and Bahn associate art and artworks with “cognitive archaeology,” using it to ask the question “What did they [peoples from long ago] think?” (1991, p. 339). They argue that:

...ancient art...[has] long been studied by scholars...for the prehistoric period...earlier generations of archaeologists tended in desperation to create a kind of counterfeit history, “imagining” what ancient people must have thought or believed. It was this undisciplined, speculative approach that helped to spark off the New Archaeology [the application of rigorous scientific methodology to Archaeology in the 1960s], with its pressure for more scientific methods... (p. 339)

Here, the authors classify the practice of making artistic interpretations as an act of “desperation,” which leads to “counterfeit” history, and that it is “undisciplined” and

“speculative” (p. 339). It is not my intention to claim that archaeologists or anyone else can accurately understand, by imagination, what the creators of objects from long ago thought or believed. Rather, it is to note the terminology and approaches to the construction of knowledge used by positivist archaeologists trained in the Western scientific perspective that serves to discount and discredit non-positivist ways of knowing about objects that may be referred to as “art.”

Therefore, learning from Western colonial scientific epistemologies as they are applied in the field of archaeology, I understand that, in general, the term “artifact” more frequently refers to utilitarian culturally significant objects upon which positivist conclusions may be based. These conclusions often emphasize the shape, size, material of construction and original intended purpose of the objects. These features are usually directly observable. In contrast, “art” in academic archaeological contexts more frequently refers to items designed to illicit esoteric, aesthetic responses from their viewers, and Western scholars are less inclined to classify functional utilitarian objects, like tools, as “art.”<sup>29</sup> In narrating Indigenous histories, archaeologists and historians have often centred their studies on positivist analyses of “artifacts” that represent “the most authentic period of non-Western cultures’ existence” (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202), replicating the colonial logics of the salvage paradigm. History curriculum writers inherit the belief in the distinction between studying “art” as unscientific and speculative, and the study of more scientifically accessible “artifacts” based on observable traits and utilitarianism, from the Academy in which they were taught, and then often perpetuate

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<sup>29</sup> The lines between “art” and “artifact” are blurred and I do not intend to suggest that these terms only represent a binary within which all objects can be ascribed status as one *or* the other. For example, utilitarian implements can be adorned with purely aesthetic features that do not seem to directly contribute to their functionality, but enhance their artistic form. Important here is how I am discerning the *use of* concepts like art/artifact in constructing Indigenous histories for use in curriculum.

this discourse in constructing histories in secondary curriculum.

### **“Art” and “Artifact” in Curriculum**

In secondary History and Art curriculum, authours reproduce Western positivist/scientific notions that the importance of “artifacts” lies in their directly observable traits. In Newman et. al.’s (2001) world history textbook, for example, they suggest that, “Artifacts are the key to a wealth of information about the society being studied, but unlocking that information requires careful analysis. Artifacts can be broken down into two main categories: organic remains...and inorganic remains such as stone tools or pottery” (p. 9). Notice here the expressly utilitarian examples the authours employ to help iterate the significance of “artifacts,” specifically stone tools and pottery, reminiscent of Renfrew and Bahn’s (1991) text. Additionally, in the wider Canadian and World Studies curriculum guidelines, the definitions of “artifacts” and their stated importance indicate that they are both distinct from “art,” and valuable in scientific contexts because of their observable utilitarian functions. In the Ontario curriculum, for grades 9 and 10 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018a), and 11 and 12 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015), learning outcomes stipulate that “Primary sources may include, but are not limited to, *artefacts*, *art works*, census data and other statistics...and some maps” (2015, p. 296, 2018a, p. 106). I notice here the distinction made between “artefacts” and “art works,” and further, that the glossaries in both curriculum documents define “artefact” as “[a]n item (e.g., a tool, weapon, household utensil, etc.) made by people in the past and now used as historical evidence” (2015, p. 555, 2018a, p. 179). I also notice the curriculum writer’s reliance on examples such as tools, weapons and utensils which exemplifies what might be called a mechanical “condition of utilitarianism” with which



archaeologists have defined “artifacts” worth studying with the colonial logics of positivist epistemologies.

The term “art” is difficult to define, and is fraught with multiple meanings, interpretations, and implications. For the purposes of my research in education, however, I rely on definitions utilized in curriculum. Curriculum writers tend to define “art” in ways that not only replicate those definitions used in anthropology and archaeology, but in ways that demonstrate the influence of the salvage paradigm. In a textbook used in Ontario high school art departments, for example, Brommer (2007) notes that;

It is impossible to establish a definition of art that will please everyone. The term is broad; each age of humanity has different ideas about it. While we may not be able to define art to everyone’s satisfaction, we can define some of the standards by which art is evaluated...We generally base our evaluation of works of art on such criteria as craftsmanship, design and aesthetic properties. (pp. 4-6)

Relevant to considerations of how “art” is differentiated from “artifact” in curriculum is Brommer’s emphasis here on evaluating “craftsmanship, design and aesthetic properties” as qualifiers of art (2007, p. 6). He goes further, teaching students about the tentative inclusion of “utilitarian” items such as cooking and eating utensils, clothing, and structures as art by asserting that, “Utility is a term that describes an object’s usefulness...all these objects have artistic qualities in addition to their functional qualities” (2007, p. 8). Here I note that Brommer refrains from directly calling utilitarian items “art,” instead noting that they may have “artistic qualities.” Through this line of thought, Brommer implicitly makes a distinction between “artistic” and “functional” objects based at least in part on an item’s perceived practical “usefulness.” Other curriculum authors have gone farther in defining art in this way, such as Mittler, whose Art textbook teaches students that, “In the visual arts, **fine arts** refers to *paintings*,

*sculpture, and architecture, arts which have no practical function and are valued in terms of the visual pleasure they provide or their success in communicating ideas or feelings*” (2000, p. 9, emphasis in original). Both Brommer and Mittler note the centrality of aesthetic properties or visual pleasure to define art, and both make distinctions between the esoteric properties of “art,” and the “utility” of functional objects, and the suggestion that artworks by comparison have “no practical function” (Mittler, 2000, p. 9), reminiscent of the distinctions made between these terms in academia.

Curriculum writers of history and art do more than replicate distinctions between “art” and “artifact.” They additionally draw on each other’s colonial curriculum to frame their disciplines to high school students. For example, in his art textbook, Mittler (2000) includes a chapter on “The Native Arts of the Americas,” and in it asserts that;

Archaeologists believe that the first visitors to North America were groups of Asian hunters who crossed an ancient land bridge across the Bering Strait. They began to arrive in what is now Alaska between 20,000 and 40,000 years ago. Gradually these people spread out to cover all parts of North and South America...all of the groups created art of some kind, which gives us insight into their cultures. (p. 246)

I note here the unquestioning reliance on the Western archaeological narrative of the Bering Strait theory and the teaching that Indigenous Peoples were “Asian hunters” and “visitors” to North America. The chapter goes on to include Inuit engravings and masks, Kwakiutl masks, Totem Poles, Navajo pottery, and earthen mounds such as the Great Serpent Mound in Ohio. Prioritizing culturally significant objects such as these demonstrates the bias in colonial curriculum which situates Indigenous objects as being identifiable as art based on the “visual pleasure they provide” and what the author believes is having “no practical function.” I understand two things from these teachings. The first construction downplays the “practical function” of some of these objects in the

Indigenous cultures of which they were parts. Second, the objects being identified here conform to colonial notions of the salvage paradigm. The featured objects such as Totem Poles and masks are often used in colonial curriculum to identify and define Indigenous history and culture based on the significance of the objects being markedly different from objects used in settler societies, to the point of being situated as “exotic.” In this way, curriculum writers use the featured artworks to be indicative of “... the most authentic period of non-Western cultures' existence,” and of the “...more elaborate and significant objects these members produced” (Whitelaw 2006, p. 202).

In their consideration of the 2013 art exhibition “inVISIBILITY: Indigenous in the City,” Dion and Salamanca note the colonial frameworks within which “artifacts” and “art” are often presented:

Anthropology museums are concerned with collecting, salvaging and exhibiting objects representing material culture of what they deem to be authentic and vanishing Indigenous people. Art galleries represent the history of “aesthetic” objects by Western peoples from a distinctly western perspective. (2014, p. 165)

Dion and Salamanca underscore that Western approaches to the display and interpretation of culturally significant objects have usually been to assess the aesthetic value of items against a Eurocentric standard when those objects have been classified as “art.” Further, their insights point to Western approaches that assume to “preserve” vestiges of so-called vanishing Indigenous cultures when those objects have been classified as “artifacts.” Just as the latter is a direct example of Western academic authorities enacting salvage paradigm thinking, the former can be seen to reinforce salvage paradigm frameworks. The assessment of Indigenous artworks against Eurocentric standards of what constitutes aesthetic skill or excellence, akin to what Younging (2018, pp. 52-53) proposes about the

colonial use of the term “artifact,” risks dissociating the object classified as “art” from its cultural context, and attempts to force the piece to conform to Western notions about its significance in terms of what it might communicate about the culture it represents. Dion and Salamanca (2014) also assert that, “Within Indigenous traditions visual art—like the art of storytelling—is recognized as something more than entertainment” (p. 162). They note some of the ways in which objects of art created by Indigenous Peoples can manifest Vizenor’s (1994) idea of survivance, survival plus resistance (Dion and Salamanca, 2014, p. 160) that can be/is always political (p. 169).

Dion and Salamanca (2014) teach me that productions of Indigenous art can disrupt the binary often expressed in Western academia and curriculum, that “art” largely has “no practical function” or utilitarian purpose (Mittler, 2000, p. 9). Disrupting colonial power structures replicated in curriculum discourses that position Indigenous art as vestiges of vanishing cultures is distinctly and immediately purposeful. As I undertake research in museums organized by Indigenous educators, I do not position myself as an expert on “art” nor on the ways that art might be interpreted. Rather, I explore the ways that Indigenous educators co-position culturally significant objects that Western scholars might classify as “art” or “artifacts,” and the ways in which their co-positioning of objects can teach diverse audiences about Indigenous histories otherwise than through false binaries.

### **“Art” and “Artifact” in the Canadian Museum of History**

As the museum guest enters the first room of the First Peoples Hall at the CMH, they are welcomed by a large video screen playing a video on a repeating loop in English,

French, and various Indigenous languages with subtitles.<sup>30</sup> The hosts of the video describe a variety of aspects of their lives that are important to their histories and identities.<sup>31</sup> Immediately after the video screen, the guest follows a gently winding central hallway situated between similarly winding tables to the right and left of the guest. One of the information plaques embedded in the tables provides guests with a title/theme of this section of the gallery. It reads, “We are Diverse: We inscribe our creativity, our histories and our identities through the work of our hands, and the work of our minds.” On the guest’s right and left sides, the tables feature a series of information plaques with descriptions and maps that discuss the variety of objects positioned free-standing in the open air behind the tables as well as in glass cases. Aside from those similarities, however, I immediately noticed a difference in the kinds of objects positioned on the two sides of the walkway. The first table on the right features a diversity of traditional outfits and clothing from various locations on Turtle Island/North America. Although the information plaques reveal that the items of clothing are from the 1900s and not from the time before European contact, they are mostly made from traditional materials such as seal skin, moose, deer and caribou hides, and fox and muskrat fur. Some decorative features include silk and glass items (see Table 1).

<u>Right Side Table 1</u>	
<u>Gallery Context</u>	<u>Object(s) Description/Date/ Materials</u>
Glass case	1 pair mittens, Inuit, late 1900s, sealskin. 1 pair mittens, Labrador Innu, mid 1900s, otter fur.

<sup>30</sup> Subtitles seem to be in English when French or an Indigenous language is heard, and in French when English or an Indigenous language is heard.

<sup>31</sup> A plaque on the wall informs guests that the video features Abel Tingmiak, Amos Key, Beverley O’Neil, Chad Eneas, Cherith Mark, Diane Pfeifer, Emily Hanson-Akavak, Emma Shorty, Gordon McGregor, Lawrence Durocher, Lisa Lewis, Nancy Sillett, Pauline Sanipass, and Pierra Benjamin.

Glass case	1 pair mittens, Chipewyan-Métis, 1990, Moose hide, fox, caribou, wool, sinew, cotton, glass.
Glass case	1 pair mittens, Dene, early 1900s, hide, muskrat fur, wool, silk 1 pair mittens, Sahtu Got'ine (Bearlake), 1991, moosehide, rabbit fur, wool, cotton, caribou hide, fibre.
Open-air behind tables	Hood, Coat, Leggings set. Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet), (Maine, U.S.A.), 1913-1914, wool, silk, cotton, glass.
Open-air behind tables	Robe, Algonquin-Pikwakanagan (Golden Lake) Ontario 1975, deer hide, moosehide, wood.
Open-air behind tables	Coat, mittens, leggings, moccasins. Labrador Innu, 1909-1911, caribou hide, fur, sinew, thread.
Open-air behind tables	Amauti, Nunatsiarmiut, Nunavut, 1980. Cotton, fur, wool.
Table 1. The first of the tables on the guest's right-hand side features a diversity of traditional clothing largely made with traditional materials.	

In stark contrast to the culturally significant objects at the first right-side table, the first left-side table features plaques with ten pictures of contemporary Indigenous artists, athletes, and scholars with accompanying descriptions. Behind each picture/description sits a culturally significant object associated with each individual. The objects sit either in glass cases or in the open air behind the table (see Table 2).

<u>Left Side Table 1</u>	
<u>Name with Nation &amp; Occupation</u>	<u>Culturally Significant Object</u>
Maime Migwans, Anishnaabe Craftsperson	Box, porcupine quills, birchbark. 1992
Zacharias Kunuk, Inuit	Father and Child whalebone sculpture, 1987
Georges E. Sioui, Huron-Wendat, History Professor	Book, <i>For an Amerindian Autohistory</i> , 1999
Sarah Hardisty, Slavey	Jacket, leggings and moccasins. Hides and furs, 1988
Maria Campbell, Métis authour	Book, <i>Halfbreed</i> , 1973

Sheldon Souray, Métis	Montreal Canadiens hockey uniform, 2007
Darren Zack, Anishnawbek athlete	Book, <i>Z-Man: Darren Zack</i> . (John Thompson) 2006
Buffy Sainte-Marie, Cree-Piapot	Mouthbow, 2002
Sharon Shorty, Inland Tlingit, Northern Tutchone, Norwegian Storyteller/comedian	Gramma Susie Outfit, 1996
Jacob Ezra Thomas, Cayuga Chief, Six Nations	Food Bowl and paddle (wood), 1973
Table 2. The first of the tables on the guest's left-hand side features a diversity of items that demonstrate a myriad of artistic talents.	

Upon close inspection of the beautiful objects at the first of the gallery's tables on the left side, I noticed two things. The first was that, in contrast with the traditionally made garments at the table on the right side, these objects might primarily be referred to as objects of "art" through the Western perspectives discussed above.

The artistic objects are not arranged according to historical-chronological dates or order. True to the title plaque of this gallery, "We Are Diverse," this group of artistic items is varied, including a quillwork box, a whalebone sculpture, books, clothing, a musical instrument, and eating utensils. In these displays, there is a generative blurring of lines between "art" and functional, utilitarian "artifacts." Artworks made by/about Anishinaabe craftspeople and athletes include Maime Migwans' quillwork box and a book about Darren Zack, renowned Anishnawbek softball pitcher, titled *Z-Man: Darren Zack* written by John Thompson. Both are the products of different kinds of art forms, and while they have utilitarian functions, the context in which these artistic works are presented confront and challenge the binary between "art" and "artifact" that predominates the history curriculum. Mamie Migwans' quillwork box sits in a glass case, behind a brief description of Migwans' experience learning, producing, and teaching the

art of making birch bark and quillwork boxes. The associated information plaque tells guests that the box is “Anishnaabe...[from] Ontario 1992, Made by Maime Migwans, [made from] Porcupine quills, birchbark, elm bark, sweet grass and dye,” adding that, “Continuing a tradition developed by Anishnaabe and Odawa artists...she made baskets, moccasins, quilts and table mats, and bark boxes decorated with porcupine quills. She taught basketry and quillwork to many members of her family.” The description is followed by a direct quote from Mamie Migwans, “I started making boxes in 1979, but before that I was always watching my mother making them (Interview with Judy Hall, CMCC).”

Important to my learning at the table with Migwans’ work is an understanding of how Western distinctions between “art” and “artifact” are not only blurred, but are done so in via the ways these culturally significant object attests to family relationships and the continuity of artistic traditions. The information label explicitly refers to Migwans continuing a tradition developed by “Anishnaabe and Odawa *artists* (emphasis added)” and describes the items she made as “baskets, moccasins, quilts and table mats, and bark boxes,” which are all highly utilitarian items. Furthermore, the plaque emphasizes how Migwans “taught basketry and quillwork to many members of her family,” and, by her own account, that she “...was always watching [her] mother making them.” In the inaugural gallery of the First Peoples Hall, the initial table on the guest’s left offers a teaching about the importance of objects as holistic points of convergence for family relationships and the continuity of diverse artistic traditions in making utilitarian items. These items, for example Migwans’ quillwork box, defy being consigned into categories between which Western epistemologies tend to make divisive distinctions, like “art” and



“artifact.”

Drawing on my learning from the CMH’s “Peoples of the Longhouse” gallery (see Chapter 4), I noted there that the educators who organized the presentation of Haudenosaunee pottery similarly situated the objects in a narrative that emphasized the importance of family connections, manifested through the creation of items both “utilitarian” and “aesthetic/artistic.” Migwans’ birch bark/quillwork box and its associated description/lesson represents a vastly different tradition from a different Indigenous nation than that of the Haudenosaunee and I do not mean to equate the two here. Rather, I learn from both galleries how teaching with culturally significant objects can challenge and disrupt colonial epistemologies that artificially assign such complex items into categories that replicate Western taxonomies like “art” and “artifact.” Additionally, I learn here more about how the lessons manifested through the objects can confront the historical proclivity of colonial archaeologists to locate artifacts’ interpretive importance in scientifically observable physical traits. For Migwans, it seems to me that the importance of the objects is in their representation of family relationships and the continuation of traditions learned from her mother – survivance – rather than in the scientifically observable features of the item.

The traditional clothing featured on the right side of the hallway certainly conforms to Western definitions of “artifact.” A closer examination of the objects there, however, speaks to the importance of the diversity in Indigenous artistic techniques that they demonstrate, rather than to the practice of constructing histories based on stylistic changes over time. The items also resist easy categorization into Western frameworks that identify objects as “art” or “artifacts” (see Table 3).

<u>Right Side Table 2</u>	
<u>Gallery Context</u>	<u>Object(s) Description/Date/ Materials</u>
1 Glass case: 2 pairs moccasins	1 pair of moccasins with dual side seam and vamp. Gwich'in (Kutchin). North West Territories, 1992. Moosehide, beaver fur, wool, glass. 1 pair of moccasins with Centre Seam and Vamp. Northern Ojibwa-Nehiyah (Cree) Métis. Mid 1900s. Hide, embroidery thread.
1 Glass case, 1 pair moccasins	1 pair of moccasins with Centre Seams. O-non-dowa-gah (Seneca). Mid 1900s. Hide, cotton, velvet, glass.
1 Glass case, 3 pair moccasins	1 pair of moccasins with dual side-seam. Nehiyaw Cree, 1993, Moosehide, glass, cotton. 1 pair of moccasins with single side-seam. Nakoda (Assiniboine) around 1900, hide, glass. 1 pair of Separate-Sole Moccasins. Niisitapiikwan (Blackfoot Confederacy) mid-late 1900s, hide, glass.
Open-air behind tables	1 Dress. Gayogoho:no' (Cayuga) early 1900s, silk, cotton. 1 Skirt: Haudenosaunee, mid 1900s, cotton, silk. 1 pair of leggings: Haudenosaunee, mid 1900s, cotton, wool, silk.
Open-air behind tables	Child's Rabbit-Fur Hat and Child's Rabbit-Fur Coat. Eeyou (Eastern Coastal James Bay Cree). 1973. Rabbit Fur, hide, wool, plastic.
Open-air behind tables	1 coat. Métis. Northern Great Plains. 1835-1845. Hide.
Table 3. The second of the tables on the guest's right-hand side features a diversity of traditionally made moccasins with a mix of traditional and non-traditional materials.	

The second table on the right features an array of traditionally made clothing and apparel. All these items are from the 1900s, except for a Métis coat from 1835-1845. The items at this table include three glass cases with a total of six pairs of moccasins from different parts of Turtle Island/North America (See Table 3). Following the theme of the gallery mentioned at the first table, "We Are Diverse," an information plaque at the second right-side-table informs the guest about "Diversity in Technique: Diversity is also found in the

techniques used to make similar items. This display features six varieties of moccasin patterns from across North America.” The first pair of moccasins is made with a “Centre Seam and Vamp,” and the plaque reveals that it is Northern Ojibwa-Nehiyah (Cree)-Métis, from the mid-1900s, and further, that “This technique involved wrapping a single large section of hide around the foot, fastening it at the top with a centre seam and adding a small central vamp.”<sup>32</sup> In the same glass case rests another pair of moccasins, which are “made by Effie Blake” [Gwich’in (Kutchin)] from the Northwest Territories in 1992. This pair is described as “Moccasins with Dual Side-Seam and Vamp,” and that “This technique involves attaching a single hide sole to a vamp on top of the foot. The seams are found where the sole and vamp meet.” A third pair of the footwear sits in its own glass case, which is labelled as being “O-non-dowa-gah (Seneca)” from the mid-1900s, and its plaque reads, “Moccasins with Centre Seams.” This style of manufacture involves wrapping a single large piece of hide around the foot and fastening it at the top. This pattern is similar to the centre seam pattern with vamp but does not include a vamp. The last of the glass cases with moccasins at this table contains three pairs. The pair on the left are “Moccasins with Dual Side-Seam,” made by a Nehiyaw (Cree) craftsman in 1993 from Maskwacis, Alberta. The plaque teaches that “In this technique, there are two main hide components: one for the sole and one for the top of the foot. There are visible seams on both sides of the moccasin, and there is no vamp.” The central pair are “Moccasins with Single Side-Seam,” produced by a Nakoda (Assiniboiné) artist of the Northern Great Plains around 1900. “This style of moccasin has one large central hide component that is sewn together to create a seam on one side-usually the outer edge of

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<sup>32</sup> A “vamp,” as I learned is a separate piece of (often) hide that can be attached to the top section of the moccasin. It is also sometimes referred to as a tongue or an “upper.”

the foot-and has no vamp.” Finally, the moccasins on the right are “Separate Sole Moccasins,” and were “Made by Mary Jane Henderson” [Niisitapiikwan (Blackfoot Confederacy)] from the Northern Great Plains in the mid-to late 1900s. From this plaque, I learn that “This pattern is similar to the dual side seam pattern, but with the sole shaped to the individual wearer’s foot. This style does not include a vamp.”

In my interpretation of the teachings at this table, the lessons about the moccasins disrupt colonial distinctions between “art” and “artifact.” Traditionally made moccasins have obviously utilitarian functions. However, they are also highly artistic (their makers invest them with a great/high degree of artistic expression). For example, several of the pairs of moccasins feature floral motifs sewn onto them with brightly coloured glass beads. The vamps on the Northern Ojibwa-Nehiyah (Cree)-Métis moccasins with centre seam and vamp are decorated with purple, yellow and black flowers intricately woven with embroidery thread. Before conducting my research, I knew very little about the many ways in which moccasins are made. The plaques inscribed with explanations, as well as the objects themselves, present these teachings in a way that disrupts colonial distinctions between “art” and “artifact.” The broader theme with which the museum educators utilize moccasins highlights the wide diversity of artistic practices that different Indigenous craftspeople employ in the making of footwear. To centre the diverse ways moccasins can be made with various physical examples from different nations does much to disrupt the colonial logics often embedded in curriculum resources that tend to depict Indigenous cultures as homogenous (Battiste, 2013, p. 31). Showcasing a variety of examples of moccasins largely from recent times, the mid- to late-1900s, also does much to disrupt salvage-paradigm narratives that portray Indigenous cultures as “vanishing.”

Additionally, the focus on the technological variations in seams, vamps and overall construction styles does much to disrupt the frontier logics that present objects crafted by Indigenous artists as exemplars of a “most authentic period of non-Western cultures’ existence,” thus confronting settler discourses of the salvage paradigm (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202).

The themes and messages of this room in the gallery are important, since it is the first large room the museum visitor walks through after the initial welcoming video. The Indigenous educators chose, for this room, to position contemporary objects that speak to a diversity of backgrounds, locations on Turtle Island, and art styles (left side of the gallery) alongside objects that are no less contemporary, but that may reflect Western definitions of “artifacts” and examples of traditional clothing (right side of gallery). This easy distinction is challenged, however, as many objects from both sides of the room clearly have “utilitarian purposes” and are also decorated to be highly aesthetically pleasing. To assign objects from either side of the hallway to artificial categories of “art” or “artifact” is to force the objects to conform to Western taxonomies that, through their ascription in curriculum, have implicitly replicated the colonial logics inherent in the salvage paradigm.

### **“Art” and “Artifact” in the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation**

The guest entering the museum gallery at the OCF is met with a large glass case divided into three sections, which faces the entryway. Similar to the first series of tables in the First Peoples Hall at the CMH, at this learning centre, I noted a diversity of objects that collectively resist being assigned status as “art” or “artifacts.” The first (rightmost) section of the glass case features 2 quillwork boxes, 2 corn husk dolls, one light brown

and the other purple, a turtle sculpture made from reeds, and a contemporary metal hammer with a wooden handle. This section of the case does not contain information cards to indicate who made the objects or when. The second (middle) section of the glass case features an unlabelled reed cradle set on a quilt with an eight-pointed star motif, and a framed linocut picture. An information card tells the guest that the linocut is from 2003 and is titled, "*The Pommerngrief Meets the Anishnawbe Thunderspirit*," by Ahmoo Angeconeb (Ojibwe). The third (leftmost) section of the case features two unlabelled birch bark baskets with floral motifs and a 1991 acrylic-on-canvas painting, *Humming-Bird*, by Ivan Shawana. The collection of unlabelled items like the reed cradle, corn husk dolls and birch bark baskets speak to various functional purposes. At the same time, they represent the artistic skills of their makers and attest to the variety of materials and resources with which Anishinaabe craftspeople manufacture diverse objects.

The arrangement of objects in the glass case directs the viewer's gaze to the back wall of the structure. There, the two framed items represent the only pieces in the case with information labels. The central piece, "*The Pommerngrief Meets the Anishnawbe Thunderspirit*," by Ahmoo Angeconeb depicts a griffin on the left standing rampant with outstretched claws facing a Thunderspirit on the right. To discover more about the artist, I noted Karlinsky's online article in *GalleriesWest*, a Calgary-based art magazine, in which she relays that:

Angeconeb was born in Sioux Lookout in northwestern Ontario, and he has traveled extensively in Europe, particularly in Germany, where a market for his work has developed...Angeconeb works out of the Woodland tradition... prints by the artist show a fascinating juxtaposition of animals taken from an Aboriginal cosmology and European heraldry, as in *The Pommerngrief Meets the Anishnawbe Thunderspirit*. (Karlinsky, 2006, para. #8, 11)

Karlinsky asserts that Angecone worked for a time in Germany and employed animals from European heraldry. This may explain his inclusion in this linocut of the Pommerngrief, or Pomeranian griffin (“Pomerania” is a north German territory, while “greif” is a German word for “griffin”). Griffins are common in European heraldry. To learn more about the imagery Angecone uses in the linocut, I consulted Pomedli’s (2014) interpretation of the artwork. He asserts that:

The tensions between and interdependence of the creatures in the sky and those in the upper and lower waters are evident in Angecone’s linocut, “The Pommerngrief Meets the Anishinawbe Thunderspirit.” A winged serpent with horns and tail, and with tongue exposed, stands on its hind legs and is about to claw with its front ones. The heads of Thunderbird and a human being merge with each other; a human hand is raised and a wing elevated as if to stave off or pacify the serpent. (Pomedli, 2014, p. 214)

From Pomedli, I understand that the Thunderspirit in the linocut is contending against or placating the European griffin. The OCF offers the guest further education on the nature and roles of Anishinaabe Thunder Beings. Nearby stands a three-sided sheet metal column rising to about 1.5 metres tall. On each of its sides are affixed sheets of 8.5 x 11’ papers with texts of different topics. One of the topics teaches the visitor more about Thunder Beings from Anishinaabe traditions. The unnamed author relates that:

Stories of Thunder Beings are sacred.

Descending from the skyworld. Their nests located beyond the clouds, in the uppermost regions of mountaintops...Our relationship with these beings has always been acknowledged and is highly regarded, and diverse...As protectors, they battle against the great serpents within the waters and drive off the malevolent beings on land and the bad spirits who wish ill-will...The Thunder Beings importance...is depicted in traditional oral stories, weaved, beaded or sewn onto medicine bags and pouches, carved or painted onto stone, or etched into our skins....

Important to my learning from Angecone’s linocut is noting in the above quote the diverse relationships between the Anishinaabe and Thunder Beings, as well as the battle

the Thunder Beings do with malevolent spirits. Additionally, the OCF teaches here that the depiction of Thunder Beings in objects like pouches and rock paintings attest to their significant relationships with Anishinaabe Peoples. From Angeconeb's linocut, Pomedli, and the information paper presented in the OCF, I learn about the significance of Thunder Beings and their struggle against European "serpents" (Pomedli, 2014, p. 214).

What follows is my personal interpretation of the linocut: it is possible that the Thunderbird does battle with, or staves off, the Pommerngrief to "drive off the malevolent being... who wish[es] ill-will" (OCF). Angeconeb has beautifully depicted an Anishinaabe Thunder Being in contest against a European griffin which may represent colonial-settler forces. If this interpretation is consistent with Angeconeb's artistic expression, the work powerfully attests to the resistance/survivance of the Anishinaabe worldview against colonialism. Furthermore, the linocut directly challenges the salvage paradigm. The teaching by the educators at the OCF – that "Our relationship with these beings has always been acknowledged and is highly regarded, and diverse" – instructs guests how Anishinaabe worldviews continue to defy settler attempts to consign Anishinaabe Peoples to a vanishing status. The teaching of (hi)story through a contemporary linocut, which is not a traditional art form, disrupts the Western positivist notion that Indigenous histories can best be constructed through the organization and interpretation of "artifacts" like stone points and potsherds according to visibly discernable changes over time. It refutes the contention inherent in the salvage paradigm that objects through which to perceive historical narratives must be the "more elaborate and significant objects these members produced" (Whitelaw, 2006, p. 202). The linocut and information papers teach about Anishinaabe history and worldview, through a



contemporary medium that both defies colonial definitions of “artifact,” and resists colonial-curriculum distinctions of “art” as having “no practical function” (Brommer, 2000, p. 9).

The second framed piece in the glass case, and the only other piece in the case to have an information card, is a 1991 acrylic-on-canvas painting, *Humming-Bird*, by Ivan Shawana. The painting features a hovering red, black, white, and gold hummingbird in the lower right corner, reaching up with its beak to access a red cup-shaped flower, which is tipped down to face the hummingbird. The flower grows from a vine with five green leaves on it, and a multitude of thin pointed extensions that might represent thorns. As with Angecone's linocut, the museum guest learns more about the subject of Shawana's painting, the hummingbird, from the three-sided sheet metal column holding a set of information papers. On one side of the column, a 2-page story is titled, “The Hummingbird” and it is labelled as “The Primacy of Plants as printed in *Ojibway Heritage* by Basil Johnston Copyright 1976-reprinted in 1994” (OCF). The story describes how “...Roses were once the most numerous and brilliantly coloured of all the flowers...” but as time went on, “No one paid much attention to them” (OCF). The story describes how roses dwindled in number as the rabbits ate them and grew fatter. Anishinaabeg People began to notice that bears were subsequently getting thinner, and their flesh was not as rich as before. The bears were finding smaller amounts of honey, since the bees were finding fewer flowers like roses. The imbalance grew until one summer, no roses could be found. The animals held a great meeting but did not reach a solution to the problem. Finally, the hummingbird journeyed out and eventually discovered a single, wilting rose far away. When the hummingbird returned with the rose,

“medicine men and medicine women immediately tended the rose and in a few days restored the rose to life” (OCF). When the rose was revived, it spoke to the animals in the assembly and revealed that, although the rabbits ate all the roses, the other animals should not be angry with them, since none of the other animals had spent time tending to the roses before. Toward the end of the excerpt, the story teaches the reader that, moving to restore balance, “the roses received from Nanabush the thorns to protect them...Nanabush in endowing the roses with thorns warned the assembly, *You can take the life of plants but you cannot give them life*” (OCF, emphasis in original). From this story, I learn lessons about the ecological balance between plants and animals. I learn lessons about the role that the hummingbird played in saving the rose from extinction. I learn lessons about how the roses acquired their thorns, and from Nanabush’s warning, about how easy it can be to over-exploit resources that cannot be easily replenished. On a deeper level, I learn lessons about some of the ways that Anishinaabe history and worldviews can be manifested in contemporary artworks like Shawana’s painting, “Humming-Bird.”

As I left the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation’s Museum, I caught, then stopped, myself thinking that these galleries are mainly “art” galleries rather than “history” galleries. Then I realized that the educational and teaching scaffolding developed by my experience in my colonial education was tacitly leading me to contrast the culturally significant objects I had seen in the galleries with what I was taught about the binary between “art” and “artifacts.” This afforded me a good opportunity to question those assumptions and assess the underlying power structures that lead history teachers such as myself to pre-qualify objects that are appropriate to help construct historical narratives as opposed to those

more appropriate to illicit aesthetic, visual reactions. My learning in the OCF galleries leads me to confront and interrogate my formal university training in positivist archaeology that emphasizes the analysis and dating of visibly discernable changes in “artifact” types as a “scientifically reliable” method of constructing Indigenous histories. From Western archaeology, I learned that accessing histories through media that settler-scholars label as “art” was pejoratively branded as “counterfeit history” and was an “...undisciplined, speculative approach...” (Renfrew and Bahn, 1991, p. 339).

At the OCF, I encountered Anishinaabe authors who told (hi)stories and artists who created expressive culturally significant objects which manifested those historical teachings. Those historical teachings, including some education on the nature of Thunder Beings, roses, and hummingbirds, disrupt Western notions of the salvage paradigm, since they are narrated in present tense artistic productions that effectively perform functional, educational, tasks that contradict notions of a “vanishing” culture. Culturally significant objects such as the pieces crafted by Angeconeb and Shawana that enact functional purposes and demonstrate elaborate artistic aesthetic qualities distort Western binary notions such as a distinction between “art” and “artifact” that replicate the colonial power structures behind the salvage paradigm. To continue to teach Indigenous histories based on powerful distinctions between “art” and “artifact,” and in ways that isolate “artifacts” of the type that might be called the most “...elaborate and significant objects these members produced” (Whitehall, 2006, p. 202) is to replicate colonial power structures that position Indigenous histories as vanishing. It is to conform to the presuppositions of the decades- and centuries-old approaches that constitute ongoing colonial violence.

## **“Art/Artifact,” and the Salvage Paradigm in the National Museum of the American Indian**

My study of the items in the Heye Collection includes an understanding of the individual for whom the collection is named, the person who compiled the objects in the first place. The Indigenous historians and scholars interpreting the Heye Collection at the NMAI, New York location, have situated information plaques about George Gustav Heye at the entrances of the rooms currently housing the collection’s culturally significant objects. The information about Heye speaks to his motivations in amassing the collection from Indigenous nations from the Arctic to the southern tip of South America. In this information, I perceive a distinct undertone of salvage paradigm thinking:

### **George Heye’s Legacy: An Unparalleled Collection**

The objects in this collection were largely collected by...Heye, a New Yorker who quit Wall Street to indulge his passion for American Indian artifacts. Over time, Heye gathered some 800,000 pieces from throughout the Americas, the largest such collection ever compiled by one person...Heye began collecting in Arizona in 1897...he purchased large assemblages from museums and collectors, hired anthropologists to undertake collecting expeditions, and sponsored excavations at ancestral Native sites...In 1916, he established the Museum of the American Indian-Heye Foundation...the new museum was dedicated to “unveiling the mystery of the origin of the [(colour-based racial slur in original)] men...” (NMAI)

In the NMAI’s description of Heye’s motivations, I notice the theme of the salvage paradigm. Heye gathered the items in this collection during the late 1800s and early 1900s, at the epoch of the period during which many Westerners subscribed to the “vanishing peoples” myth of Indigenous cultures. At the time when Heye was amassing this collection, Edward Curtis was staging photos to attempt to document so-called “vanishing” cultures, and American anthropologists like Franz Boas were assiduously studying Indigenous societies in the tradition of what has come to be called salvage

ethnography (Hitchens, 1994, p. 240). In many ways, the Heye Collection represents an archaeological example of Curtis' photos, a material culture exemplar of the settler preoccupation with the salvage paradigm. Particularly telling about Heye's motivation is his goal of "unveiling the mystery of the origin" (NMAI) of Indigenous Peoples, and ultimately enshrining the objects he collected into a museum expressly built for the purpose of maintaining them and showing them to public audiences.

The same information plaque that informs the museum guest about Heye's background and motivation points out that, "Today, the objects in Heye's collection are being reinterpreted by the descendants of the people who made them, providing American Indian perspectives on the Native past and present" (NMAI). I notice the emphasis placed not only on "the past," but on "the present" in the plaque. My learning in the NMAI, New York, would be tempered by a consideration of how Indigenous historians and scholars might organize historical narratives that challenge salvage paradigm and "vanishing peoples" discourses. I sought to learn in what ways Anishinaabe historians and scholars at the NMAI situate historical narratives based on culturally significant objects not just in the past, but in the present tense.

For the interpretation of the Heye Collection's items made by Anishinaabe Peoples of the Woodlands of Turtle Island, the plaque lists "Ruth Phillips and Michael Witgen (Ojibwe)" (NMAI).<sup>33</sup> Turning to the section of the galleries that feature culturally significant objects from the Woodlands in general, but from Anishinaabe society in

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<sup>33</sup> Ruth Phillips is the "Canada Research Chair in Modern Culture and Carleton University professor of art history" (Carleton University, 2020). Michael Witgen is a "a professor in the Department of History and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University, and he is a citizen of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe" (Columbia University, 2022).

particular, I studied a large, upright glass case which features an assortment of clay effigy pipes. In large lettering on the back wall of the case, the historians have had printed:

The importance of pipes throughout the Americas speaks to the symbolism of ritual smoking. *The sharing of a pipe affirms peaceful relations* among individuals and between nations. Smoking has also always been seen as a way for human prayers to reach spirit beings. Woodlands effigy pipes date back more than 2,000 years. (NMAI, emphasis in original)

In this teaching, I noticed the present-tense with which Indigenous historians and scholars narrate the significance of effigy pipes in the Woodlands. While centring the objects themselves, the historians had made sure to use phrases such as “speaks to the symbolism,” and “*The sharing of a pipe affirms peaceful relations*,” and “Smoking has...always been seen as...” (NMAI). Such diction positions historical learning about/with the objects in a contemporary context which may historicize the particular object in the glass case, but which does not historicize the Indigenous Peoples and societies of which the object continues to exist as a part. For example, the text implies that smoking with effigy pipes is enacted so that prayers can be sent to spirit beings, not only from 2,000 years ago, but also in the present. This is an example of the very kind of language which is chronically missing from Western curriculum resources, which tend to disappear both the culturally significant objects as well as Indigenous Peoples and societies. This learning emphasized for me the importance of the contexts and ways in which historical lessons can be/are framed to students. I asked myself how my own teaching and use of words about Indigenous historical topics might have relegated the topics in question to finished, historical periods, or instead illustrated that those histories and processes are ongoing. The former clearly presupposes a “vanishing peoples” attitude to teaching history, while the latter use of teaching language can challenge salvage

paradigm narratives and play a part in avoiding the replication of power structures that position Indigenous societies as “past tense.”

Anishinaabe historians and scholars continue to utilize present-tense diction and language contexts when problematizing the art/artifact binary that is reinforced in Western curriculum texts. For example, in one of the upright glass cases featuring culturally significant objects of the Woodland region of Turtle Island, a colourful bandolier bag hangs from a hook on the case’s back wall. The information plaque under the assortment of items in the case teaches the visitor about the bag:

Anishinaabe bandolier bag

Upper Great Lakes, ca. 1870

Wool and cotton cloth, glass beads

The beadwork on the shoulder straps and central panel on this large ornamental bag is loom-woven, a technique that encourages the creation of elaborate and complicated patterns. Such bags were often made and worn solely for visual impact.

In the narration about this item, I notice that again, the diction that speaks of the item’s manufacturing styles is in present-tense. The guest reads that the bag “is” loom-woven, and that it is an approach that “encourages” complicated patterns (NMAI). Additionally, the item is another example of how Indigenous historians challenge the Western proclivity to distinguish between “art” and “artifact.” Bandolier bags that are made with openings clearly have many functional purposes, including being worn in traditional ceremonies. However, the highly decorative nature of the bags, and the myriad of ways that their makers can bestow them with artistic designs and features, suggests that such items have a distinct aesthetic value. The author of the bag’s information plaque attests to this interpretation when they state that, “Such bags were often made and worn solely for visual impact” (NMAI). The manufacture of culturally significant objects such as the

bandolier bag, and the narratives that offer the museum visitor some understanding of their cultural contexts, disrupts the Western proclivity to assign such objects to binary categories such as “art” or “artifact.”

In academic discourses replicated in curriculum resources, Western authors frame “artifacts” as those traditionally-made objects, often including stone, bone, hide and clay. Western authors often frame Indigenous “arts” as being those objects made in manners and with materials that may be traditional or non-traditional, but which ostensibly conform to the parameters of Western aesthetic appeal. In the museum galleries, however, historical narratives can be and are expressed through objects of silk, gold, metals, glass, nylon, ink-on-papers, and plastic. Examining culturally significant objects in museums organized by Indigenous educators, the visitor finds many objects that are made with non-traditional materials to convey stories, identity, and culture. From this perspective, it is not so much the kind of material from which the item was crafted that is as important as the meaning it is given by a craftsperson who imbues it with significance. These inventive objects both blur the lines between Western notions of “art/artifact,” and they disrupt colonial notions of Indigenous histories as expressed through the values of the salvage paradigm. My learning at the NMAI, New York, suggests at least one significant way that settler history teachers might avoid replicating the colonial power structures that perpetuate salvage paradigm discourses through the distinctions between “art” and “artifact.” This way might be approached not only through the cessation of making distinctions in curriculum between “artworks” and “artifacts,” but by ensuring that historical narratives are structured with present-tense diction which may acknowledge the historicity of past events, but which does not historicize Indigenous cultures.



It is apparent that the Indigenous educators in the museums in which I was a guest utilize different Indigenous pedagogies to challenge the colonial knowledge frameworks that I have discussed. There is a body of literature that examines Indigenous pedagogies, particularly in Education (e.g., see Antoine, Mason, Mason, Palahicky and Rodriguez de France, 2018, Battiste, 2013, Dion, 2007, 2009). Although a detailed discussion of Indigenous pedagogies is beyond the scope of this research project, the educators in the museums organized history lessons for diverse audiences according to conceptions of knowledge that differed from Western ways of knowing. Antoine, Mason, Mason, Palahicky and Rodriguez de France (2018) point out that:

A basic assumption of Indigenous education scholars is that there are modes of Indigenous pedagogy that stem from pre-contact Indigenous educational approaches and are still ingrained in Indigenous contemporary culture. The exclusion or devaluation of Indigenous pedagogies can...limit a genuine understanding of Indigenous culture and history for all students. (p. 18)

Not only do the authors note the diversity of Indigenous pedagogies, but they note that these pedagogies continue to be manifested in contemporary culture. They describe many Indigenous pedagogies as “personal and holistic...experiential...place-based...” and “intergenerational” (2018, p. 18). Ways in which Indigenous educators situate culturally significant objects such as Anishinaabe quillwork boxes and Haudenosaunee pottery, as well as the way in which Anishinaabe educators teach lessons concerning pipes and smoking at the NMAI, New York, to name just a few examples, draw heavily on intergenerational and relational dynamics. Many of the lessons I learned that I discussed in Chapter Three are crafted according to place-based pedagogies. Although it is not the focus of this research to explore Indigenous pedagogies in detail, learning lessons from those who do employ them can help settler-teachers to envision ways to explore, with the

students under their care, that different conceptions of knowledge exist, challenging the monolithic predominance of Western ways of knowing in history curriculum. It is to a consideration of the ramifications of my learning in the museum galleries for settler-teachers that I now turn.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Decolonizing History Education: Conclusions and Ramifications

In this final chapter, I consider my learning in the museum galleries in a holistic sense, the broader ramifications of that learning on my teaching practice, areas of future research, and the difficult implications of the lessons I learned in contrast to long-sustained ideologies in history teaching in Ontario. All analyses rest on my own interpretations of my interactions with the objects and related teachings in each of the museum galleries. There are many more lessons, interpretations, and conclusions that may be made by others and with ongoing study. I am hesitant to call these thoughts “conclusions,” because they are not and cannot be final words or proclamations. My learning in these areas is both individual and ongoing, and this unfinished quality of learning may well be the foundation of my ethical responsibility to the histories I engage here. Still, I use this final chapter to reflect on the ways in which Indigenous educators teach through museums, my personal learning in the galleries, and the value of teaching history in a holistic way to better enable me to address the gaps in the curriculum that motivate my inquiries in this dissertation. Here, I would like to distinguish between notions of decolonizing deep history curriculum, and *indigenizing* deep history curriculum. Adam Gaudry (Métis) and Lorenz suggest that indigenization “represents a move to expand the academy’s still-narrow conceptions of knowledge, to include Indigenous perspectives in transformative ways” (2018, p. 218). Since settler teachers cannot provide Indigenous perspectives, they may instead consider decolonizing approaches. At risk of falling into the trap of using the notion of “decolonizing” as a metaphor that Tuck and Yang have cautioned against (2012, p. 1), I use it here to imply

that it remains the responsibility of settler teachers to fulfill their/our particular responsibilities to attend to the ways that deep history curriculum continues to replicate colonial logics and their/our roles in disrupting that teaching praxis.

Reflecting on my learning in the museum galleries, I associate some of the ramifications of that learning into 3 areas. These areas include a) the ethics of settler teachers engaging with deep history curriculum across cultural diversity and historical divides, b) settler teachers working through defenses to, and denial of, their/our responsibilities to take steps to decolonize the teaching of deep history curriculum, and c) the (re)positioning of settler teachers as learners of deep history, rather than as experts/masters. In the first tension, I consider that settler history teachers can no more author Place- or continuity-based Indigenous (hi)stories as they can move to “indigenize” the curriculum, as it is not their/our position to author those histories on behalf of Indigenous Peoples. From my research in the museums, I have gained a better understanding of the ways in which settler teachers can enact the responsibilities over which they/we have jurisdiction. Two of these responsibilities are first, to learn about the deep history of the continent from Indigenous educators in contexts like museums, in which diverse publics are welcomed, and second, to use what they/we learn in these contexts to engage in the hard work of confronting and disrupting the dominant narratives in existing curriculum and the presuppositions in their/our own relationships with their/our teacher education and practice. In the second tension, that of settler teachers moving to resist/deny their/our responsibilities to address the long-lauded power structures that fortify colonial curriculum, the work of scholars such as Roger Simon, Susan Dion, Dwayne Donald, and Eve Tuck frame my understandings of the lessons I

learned in the galleries. In her research, Susan Dion identifies a proclivity of settler teachers to distance themselves from the challenging work of engaging with, and learning from, the biographies of their relationships with Indigenous Peoples (2007, p. 330, 2009, p. 179). This avoidance can cause settler teachers to position themselves as “perfect strangers” to Indigenous Peoples, and settler teachers have used this stance to absolve themselves of their responsibilities to confront troubling discourses in their own learning and understanding of Indigenous subject matter, and in their roles as teachers helping students to engage in meaningful learning. In the third tension, I explore the ways in which my research has guided my understanding of how teachers must (re)position them/ourselves as learners of deep history rather than as experts. This kind of learning is difficult, and teachers need to confront long-held beliefs in the objectivity of the colonial curriculum and to allow themselves to remain within the difficulties of being affected by un-looked for or unwanted implications of learning and teaching (hi)stories that disrupt our understandings of how those (hi)stories are constructed. The (re)positioning of settler teachers as perpetual learners calls on settler teachers to engage with the difficult, problematical implications of being visitors, rather than “masters,” of the curriculum topics that they/we teach.

### **Comparing National and Local Museums**

One clear theme that I have documented in my research is that curriculum and resource writers have not invited Indigenous historians to the table in their development of historical narratives, particularly for the deep history of the continent. Shawn Wilson (2008) gives voice to the tensions between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing that I think serves as a basis for the differences between many of the lessons I learned in the

galleries and the missing pieces I have noticed in history curriculum:

The notion that empirical evidence is sounder than cultural knowledge permeates Western thought but alienates many Indigenous scholars...It is the notion of superiority of empirical knowledge that leads to the idea that written text supersedes oral tradition. For Indigenous scholars, empirical knowledge is still crucial, yet it is not their only way of knowing the world around them. (p. 58)

In my discussions of Place-based historical teaching, cultural continuity vs. cultural evolutionary frameworks, and the salvage paradigm in curriculum narratives, I note an ongoing “notion of superiority of empirical knowledge” (Wilson, 2008, p. 58). Reflecting on the lessons I learned in the museums, I learned from the ways in which Indigenous educators highlight frameworks of Indigenous knowledge systems. The meeting point between acknowledging fantasies of curricular superiority and the lessons of Indigenous educators is one place where decolonization can begin, provided history educators can sit at this intersection and allow their own frameworks to be touched by Indigenous teachings.

A similar tension can be found in discussions about the meaning and purpose of research. In his book *Research is Ceremony* (2008), Shawn Wilson notes that, “...research is a ceremony. The purpose of any ceremony is to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves. The research we do as Indigenous people is a ceremony that allows us a raised level of consciousness and insight into our world” (p. 11). In contrast with cold image of laboratory findings, and their assumptions of universality and objectivity, all the museums I visited showcase the contextual quality of knowledge through their representation of traditional knowledges and approaches. Some of these contexts include connections to outside spaces and Places, and the use of circles as healing and learning

spaces. In fact, all of the museums connected inside spaces to the outside, even when their galleries were located on the bottom floor of a large building, as was the case in the CMH, where blue-painted ceilings and properly aimed flood lamps give the visitor the sense of being outside.

Upon entering the NMAI in Washington, D. C., for example, the guest first walks into a large, open space, unencumbered by ceilings provided by the upper floors of the building. This space in the museum rises to the building's roof, 4 stories up, and is covered by a large, round, glass oculus. The oculus welcomes natural light into the building, and it shines down on an equally large, round rotunda space on the ground floor. The rotunda provides a large welcoming space surrounded by plush bench seating in which visitors may sit in-circle. The circle offers a generous space for gatherings, events, and ceremonies. The museum's galleries extend through 4 floors to the west of the entrance and rotunda. Similarly, the galleries of the NMAI building in New York City are contextualized in outside spaces and circles. This museum is housed in the George Gustav Heye Center, a former customs house building. As the visitor enters the building to access the galleries, they encounter a large rotunda with a high ceiling, also capped by a wide, oval skylight, which admits natural light. Under the skylight, plush bench style seating surrounds a broad, round space suitable for a wide variety of indoor events. The museum's galleries extend to the east, west, and south of the rotunda, situating this circular space at the centre of the educational teachings. While the building was originally constructed to hold a customs house and not the NMAI, the museum has nonetheless situated the circular space at the centre of its galleries.

The two smaller, local museums I visited also anchor their galleries to outside spaces

and circles. The OCF on Manitoulin Island has a central rotunda, whose high, glass-capped ceiling allows sunlight to illuminate the building's central spaces. Each of the building's rooms/galleries enter onto the rotunda. Significantly, one of the rooms contains a Healing Lodge. Two levels of concentric circular benches surround the Lodge's central hearth. A sign outside the door to the room reads,

Healing Lodge. The Healing Lodge is used for ceremonies, meetings, and small gatherings. It's circular in shape to mimic the shape of a lodge, where some healing takes place. The Ojibwe people believe that the circle represents the circle of life, and that in a circle there is no beginning or end. It also represents equality amongst us all. We sit in a circle so that we are able to see the people's faces that we are speaking to. (OCF)

The Lodge provides a safe space, and fastens the building's museum galleries to circular spaces for ceremony and healing. The MOC in St. Ignace, Michigan also possesses a Healing Lodge, situated outside the main building since the building is small, being the original mission house for the St. Ignace area Jesuit priests. The MOC's Healing Lodge is housed in a reproduction Longhouse, constructed in the style of some of the area's Wendat refugees, who moved to the region in the 1600s (MOC). Inside the Lodge, a circle of folding chairs surrounds a central hearth, and smudge bowls of sacred medicines sit close-by. While 2 of the large, national museums situate broad, glass-topped rotundas in the middle of their educational spaces, the smaller, local museums situate circular Healing Lodges as centres of ceremony. Kovach, citing Kathy Absolon, reminds me of the significance of circles in many Indigenous ceremonies and methodologies when she asserts that, "We will hear people say that our methodologies exist in our dreams...by community forums, by sitting in circles and by engaging in ceremony" (2010b, p. 126). Kovach also draws on Willie Ermine to anchor Indigenous knowledges to inner and outer spaces, when she contends that, "Indigenous knowledges are born of relational knowing,



from both inner and outer space. The outer space is the physical world..." (2010b, p. 57). At the museums, I had the opportunity to learn from educators who show how the Western construction of "empirical evidence [as] sounder than cultural knowledge...alienates many Indigenous scholars" (2008, p. 58). For settler learners who are also teachers, such as myself, Western frameworks of knowing refuse the disruption and discomfort that is needed for deep learning. While all museums shared a commitment to contextualize educational spaces in traditional epistemologies, the various educators at the museums sometimes differed in the ways that they taught hi(stories) to diverse publics through the use of culturally significant objects, and it is to this consideration that I now turn.

Here, I return to the work of Willinsky, who situates museums organized by Western archaeologists as tools of colonial oppression that "called for a boxing and preserving of natives' lives within a spectacular three-dimensional family album that preserved their place in the past" (1998, p. 65). Willinsky implies not only Western curators' tendencies to subscribe to the salvage paradigm, but also to the homogenization of Indigenous cultures by imperialistic scholars, a proclivity we still see in many history curriculum resources. Lessons that I learned from the educators at the large national museums (CMH, NMAI) confront and disrupt this narrative of homogeneity by expressing the marked diversity among the Indigenous Peoples of this hemisphere. They have, for me, offered a glimpse into Willinsky's (1998) suggestion that:

To have Native Americans curating, advising, and repatriating artifacts may disturb without completely unsettling the museum's placement of the Western visitor at the center of a universe. Rather than seeing their own perspective and knowledge unrelentingly celebrated or seeing the museum as a ledger of ownership, here Western visitors are just that, visitors to a familiar institution that is now in the hands of those whom it once simply

put on display. (p. 68)

Thinking with Willinsky, I found that the national museum galleries were more prone to “disturb without completely unsettling the museum’s placement of the Western visitor” (1998, p. 68). This was not because they “unrelentingly celebrated” Western histories, but that they embodied the greater range of representations of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island. Of course, it stands to reason that both of the national museums (the CMH and both locations of the NMAI) encompass a broader (i.e., national) reach of representation than the two smaller, local museums that centre Anishinaabe cultures and histories, where the focus is much more specific. The Indigenous educators at the CMH and NMAI engage a diverse learning audience from across the continent. In this context, the diversity of Indigenous peoples that the Anishinaabe, Haida, and other educators include in the educational spaces they attend to does not necessarily “disturb...[the expectations of] the Western visitor” attending a large nationally funded museum (Willinsky, 1998, p. 68).

However, diversity is nonetheless retained by Elders and scholars at the CMH in their emphasis on the multiplicity of strategies and materials with which different Indigenous societies made culturally significant objects. One of the first information plaques that the guest encounters in the First Peoples Hall reads, “We are Diverse: we inscribe our creativity, our histories and our identities through the work of our hands, and the work of our minds” (CMH). Here I notice that the Elders and scholars chose to teach guests that “we inscribe...our identities through the work of our hands...” (CMH). This reflection embodies Lyons’ contention that “Indian identities are constructed” through “discourse, action, and history; and finally...Indian identity is something people do, not

what they are..." (2010, p. 40). This reflection on *doing* also prefaces many of the other information plaques in the CMH set in front of culturally significant objects which are entitled, "Diversity in Local Materials," "Diversity in Technique," "Diversity in Production Materials and Tools," "Diversity in Indigenous Knowledge from the Land," "Diversity in Indigenous Knowledge on the Land," "Diversity in Indigenous Knowledge Through Creation," and "Diversity of Materials in Basket Making" (CMH). At the level of national representation, diversity is represented at the CMH through the innovative lessons they provide centering culturally significant objects.

Moving to the large national museum in the lands that now comprise the United States, Indigenous educators, historians and scholars at the NMAI in Washington, D.C. and New York City emphasize the diversity of Peoples across the hemisphere in the "Our Universes" and "Heye Collection" galleries. The culturally significant objects, stories, and teachings in these museums lead me to develop similar understandings about the educational value of accentuating the diversity among Indigenous Peoples that the teachings in the CMH do, albeit through a focus on nation. In the "Our Universes" gallery in Washington, D.C., eight smaller rooms branch out from the gallery's main chamber, each one featuring a different nation from the Arctic to Southern Chile (see Chapter Three). Indigenous historians and scholars at the NMAI, New York, have organized the objects in the Heye Collection into large glass cases that feature items and teachings from Patagonia/Tierra del Fuego (Mapuche), the Andes (Quechua), the Amazon (Shipibo), Mesoamerica and the Caribbean (Cakchiquel Maya), the Southwest (A:shiwi, Zia), and Plains and Plateau (Apsáalooke, Pawnee), the Woodlands (Ojibwe), California and the Great Basin (Barbareño Chumash, Ineseño Chumash), the Northwest Coast

(Kwakwaka'waka), and the Arctic and Subarctic (Inuit).

In the first 4 galleries at the CMH, objects from different areas of what is now Canada are more frequently arranged in glass cases together. Elders and scholars utilize information labels to tell the guest from which nation each object originates. The cases are often arranged according to themes. For example, one case features 7 fishing hooks and tools, from nations including Tsimshian, Haida, Plains Ojibwa (Saulteaux), Eeyou (Eastern Coastal James Bay Cree), and Nehiyaw (Cree) (CMH). Educators at the 2 NMAI museums instead organize objects in discrete sections according to the Places and nations from which the objects came, and the items in the cases more often represent a myriad of functions, including tools, weapons, clothes, ceramics, masks, and other articles.

From these large national museums in lands that now comprise Canada and the U.S.A., I learn lessons about what it means to retain a sense of diversity even within contexts – such as these national museums – charged to represent Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island. From the educators at the museum north of the national border, I learn to consider diversity through the myriad of alternating production techniques, styles, materials, and knowledges of objects sharing common themes, such as moccasins and fishing hooks. From the educators at the museums south of the border, I learn to consider diversity through the myriad of cultures situated in different places on Turtle Island. Thus, I observed how national museums can disrupt a Western sense of universality even while attempting to represent a broader array of representations through their focus on the diversity of activity and nation within a larger category of Indigenous knowledge. This balance has important implications not only for thinking about the challenges of representation writ large, but for thinking about teaching practices that engage Indigenous

knowledge in the context of curriculum and pedagogy.

### **Ramifications for Settler Teaching Praxis**

After conducting my research, it is evident to me that settler history teachers have much to learn from museum educators who centre culturally significant objects. I posit that history education, broadly defined, would benefit from disrupting worn-out narratives that continually situate Indigenous histories in historical-chronological frameworks at the expense of Place-based hi(storying). The Ontario Ministry of Education, and settler teachers, need to critique curriculum expectations and/or reframe how we teach expectations, respectively, of their lionizing of cultural-evolutionary terminology and concepts of cultural "progression" to supposedly more "advanced" levels of societies. Teachers might engage questions about what terms like "art" vs. "artifact" entail vis-à-vis salvage paradigm narratives and to identify and challenge times when history textbooks – and their own readings of history – replicate the colonial logics inherent in those concepts.

Narratives rooted in "settler denial" more often refuse such learning with defensive refrains that it "cannot be done," or "it is necessary to teach history in historical-chronological sequences" and other change-resistant arguments (Ng-A-Fook & Milne, 2014, p. 90). I suggest that settler history teachers work through their own tendency to denial. Museums may be an important part of this learning. If teachers could, with open minds and ready to learn, visit museums organized by Indigenous educators, they would most certainly benefit from the lessons taught by "those whom [the museums] once simply put on display" (Willinsky, 1998, p. 68). What is more, textbooks and other supplementary curriculum resources covering the deep history of Turtle Island could be

used to help students identify and critique colonial narratives that prioritize historical-chronological frameworks over Place-based hi(stories). This is particularly so where those chronological frameworks serve to position Indigenous cultures on a Eurocentric cultural-evolutionary scale abetted by presuppositions that legitimize the salvage paradigm. I would add as a caveat that all such chronological and evolutionary frameworks are Eurocentric, since they situate Indigenous histories and cultures in comparative contexts with those histories and cultures of others, usually those of Western society. Teachers and students can infer the comparative context even when it is implicit and not overtly discussed in the resource. The comparative context not only manifests a colonial method of historical knowledge-construction, it repeats the fantasy that a Western cultural position is “evolved” and “civilized,” thereby perpetuating the colonial violence of nineteenth-century social-Darwinists.

Earlier in this dissertation, I referenced Dwayne Donald’s iteration of a research sensibility he refers to as Indigenous Métissage. He presents “...an indigenized form of métissage focused on rereading and reframing Aboriginal and Canadian relations and informed by Indigenous notions of place” (2012, p. 533). It is not my intention to situate my research as an example of Indigenous Métissage, but in Donald’s work, I perceive a similarity in the ways he emphasizes the importance of Place-hi(stories) and in the ways that I perceived that Indigenous educators emphasized the importance of Place in all of the galleries in which I conducted research. I cite Donald at length here to situate his and my own understanding of the importance of place in thinking about histories past and present:

A central goal of doing Indigenous Métissage is to bring Aboriginal place-stories to bear on public policy discussions in educational contexts in

appropriate and meaningful ways. Such place-stories encourage people to rethink and reframe their received understandings of the place now called Canada and thus better comprehend the significance of Aboriginal presence and participation today. When a specific place is conceptualized as uniquely layered with the memories and experiences of different groups of people who now live together, the possibility of those different groups facing each other in ethically relational terms is enlivened. Based on this vision, Indigenous Métissage purposefully juxtaposes layered understandings and interpretations of places in Canada with the specific intent of holding differing interpretations in tension without the need to resolve or assimilate them. (2012, p. 542)

Donald suggests that the conceptualization/teaching of shared places as multi-layered and complex facilitates interactions might bridge the divide between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous peoples in what is now Canada. In my understanding of Donald's intent, he reinforces the need for settler history teachers to reframe the colonial discourses that have benefited them to emphasize the significance of Place(s) in Indigenous hi(stories). Such a reframing might constitute one step that settler history teachers are responsible for taking in the direction of working with the content of Indigenous hi(stories) in ethically relational ways.

Reflecting on my research in the museum galleries leads me to consider how I might develop my teaching praxis around Indigenous deep histories in ways that critically challenge the dominant Western narratives. In the curriculum sources cited in my dissertation, I have witnessed how textbooks truncate traditional stories, including them almost as afterthoughts, after much lengthier versions of the scientific archaeological Beringia Theory. This risks the detrimental application of multivocality in which, as Atalay cautions, "Indigenous...approaches and information are relegated to the realm of quaint folk knowledge" (2012, p. 77). Instead, as I learned in the museums, I can confront colonial narratives through my teaching praxis by centring Anishinaabe (hi)stories, for

example those that educators emphasized in the museum galleries. Far from treating with a time that Eurocentric sources label as “prehistoric,” these stories narrate time periods in ways that connect Anishinaabe cultures to the Places, and within the relationships, in which they thrive. For example, in the galleries, I learned about Nanabush (CMH, MOC), the story of Little Boy and the Seven Grandfather Teachings (NMAI, Washington D.C.), Anishinaabe Thunder Beings and the story of the Humming Bird and the Rose (OCF), and stories of the Anishinaabe Migration from the Atlantic Coast area (MOC). Stories like these do more than just confront and disrupt Western scientific historical-chronological narratives. By storying the time before European contact, these narratives can bring Indigenous knowledges to the forefront, positioning them as histories connected to particular Places, rather than relegating them to Atalay’s “quaint folk knowledge” (2012, p. 77).

Of course, many historical events can still be taught in order of time. The teaching of cause and effect can be a significant site of learning for both students and teachers. When the historical-chronological framework is given primacy/supremacy in the way that curriculum identifies and iterates history and its many narratives, however, it can appropriate Indigenous histories into frameworks that exalt Western approaches to knowledge-construction. Positioning Indigenous histories in the historical-chronological framework at the expense of situating those histories in the Places in which they occur continues the colonial experiment that Willinsky explores, in which the culturally significant objects, cultures, and histories of non-Western peoples are modified and qualified by Western authorities and put on display to a “knowing gaze” of others (1998, p. 61). It perpetuates a colonial violence that settler history teachers have the



responsibility to interrupt. Settler history teachers have long experience in drawing on pre-existing historical-chronological narratives, which constitute part of teacher education, with which to teach to students. While settler history teachers cannot be the arbiters/generators or authors of Place-based history teaching, in the sense that it is not their/our position to author those histories on behalf of others, it is our duty to include the history teachings, foci, and overall historical emphases that we can learn from Indigenous educators in contexts like museums that are appropriate for diverse publics. Contemporary curriculum documents do not provide teachers with insights into those areas of emphasis. Contemporary textbooks authored by settler teachers tend not to provide teachers with insights into those areas of emphasis. Museums organized by Indigenous educators, Elders, scholars and historians can offer some teachings through which settler teachers can learn to disrupt the replication of colonial narratives in their teaching pedagogy.

Processes through which settler teachers can interact with lessons taught in museums in ethically relational ways will continue to be a rich area for future research. A tension remains between the kinds of historical narratives that settler history teachers can learn from Indigenous educators in museum contexts, and the ways in which those narratives risk being (mis)/interpreted by teachers in classroom contexts. This kind of praxis-development, however, situates historical interpretation as fluid and ongoing, open to improvement and continual learning. The reliance on historical-chronological frameworks, by contrast, risks situating historical interpretation as unimpeachable, scientifically verified and more closed to ongoing revision. It risks lionizing the Western versions of historical interpretation as the only or most reliable versions, perpetuating the

division between whose voices count and whose interpretations are centered as being on the inside or outside. Organizing Indigenous deep-histories for educational purposes that rely on Western frameworks and priorities ensures a colonial curriculum, regardless of the particular stories or lessons therein.

In considering how my research might be read by other settler history teachers, I would urge teachers, curriculum and textbook writers, and other scholars to similarly attend museums and other learning centres organized by Indigenous educators as part of teacher-training as well as ongoing professional development. The conclusions I have drawn reflect my own experiences, positioning, and biases, and other museum guests may learn alternate lessons. One tension that the lessons I learned in the galleries illicit is the tension between the ways of knowing implied in colonial curriculum resources on deep history, and the ways of knowing enacted by Indigenous educators in the museums. The Indigenous educator's methodologies disrupt long-lauded colonial methodologies, and this necessarily positions settler teachers as visitors in deep history education. Their/our position as visitors demands a response that (re)classifies the notion of expertise or mastery that a settler history teacher can have over deep curriculum topics. Roger Simon effectively frames this tension, and I quote him at length here to help contextualize my understanding of settler teachers as learners, rather than as experts, of (hi)stories over which they have no jurisdiction to author. Simon, drawing on Pitt and Britzman's work, identifies not only the difficulties involved when someone confronts injustice in a learning context, but also the difficulty they experience in the resulting call to re-conceptualize the ways in which they accept/do not accept the call to action that the difficulty asks of them:

...what is difficult in representations of the experience of others is not only a matter of what histories are represented but also the prospect of 'encountering the self through the otherness of knowledge'. What Pitt and Britzman are referring to here are those moments when knowledge appears disturbingly foreign or inconceivable to the self, bringing oneself up against the limits of what one is willing and capable of understanding...difficulty happens when one's conceptual frameworks, emotional attachments, and conscious and unconscious desires delimit one's ability to settle the meaning of past events. In such moments one's sense of mastery is undone and correspondingly one may undergo an experience that mixes partial understanding with confusion and disorientation, the certainty of another's fear and suffering with one's own diffuse anxiety and disquiet. (Simon, 2011, pp. 433-434)

Simon's quote frames my learning in the galleries by helping me to reassess the idea that settler history teachers can have ownership over, or situate themselves as "masters" of historical content that has been structured through culturally violent processes. The need for settler teachers to disavow mastery over deep history content is particularly urgent given that to continue to teach those histories both continues the cultural violence through which they have been constructed, and positions the settler teacher as complicit in the perpetuation of that violence. Simon's description of the "confusion and disorientation...diffuse anxiety and disquiet" (2011, p. 434) which must follow the settler teacher's awareness of their/our positions as visitors in the teaching of those hi(stories) asks them/us to interrogate and disrupt their/our belief that we have mastery over the subject of Indigenous deep hi(stories) and demands that they/we situate their/ourselves within the tensions of re-thinking how we go about teaching Indigenous deep histories as visitors. Settler history teachers need to acknowledge that they/we are not only visitors in the sense of being guests in museum galleries organized by non-Western scholars to which Willinsky alludes (1998, p. 68), but of being visitors in-relationship with our understanding of deep history narratives themselves.

Although other settler history teachers might benefit from my research, one approach that I categorically discourage would be for history teachers to download their/our own responsibility to redress the history that has benefited them onto Indigenous Peoples. The call to (re)position settler teachers as visitors in the very curriculum over which they/we once assumed a level of expertise may lead many teachers to deny/deflect the uncomfortable implications that (re)positioning entails. The move to abandon assumptions of mastery over deep history curriculum may lead settler teachers to deny/abrogate their/our responsibilities to help decolonize teaching practice by situating Indigenous Peoples as the solution to redressing their/our teaching praxis. Such an idea ironically re-centres whiteness by framing Indigenous knowledge keepers as somehow charged with absolving oppressors of their ongoing implication in colonial violence. In her research, Susan Dion has identified the tendency of settler teachers to evade the hard work of engaging in the difficulties of their knowing/not knowing about the history of relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians, by situating them/ourselves as “perfect strangers” to Indigenous Peoples. She points out that “...teachers, like many Canadians, claim the position of “perfect stranger” to Aboriginal people. There is an ease with which teachers claim this position...it is informed simultaneously by what teachers know, what they do not know, and what they refuse to know” (2007, pp. 330-331, 2009, p. 179). Researching the ways in which emotion and fear play roles in facilitating settler teacher denial and avoidance of engaging with the troubling nature of the content of the history of Indigenous-Canadian relationships, Dion suggests that:

While dominant discourses structure teachers’ and students’ engagement with the stories of post-contact history, teachers and students take up these discourses as a way of protecting themselves from having to recognise their own attachment to and implication in knowledge of the history of the

relationship between Aboriginal people and Canadians. (2007, p. 331)

Dion's assertion highlights one way in which settler teachers have moved to the position of perfect stranger. That is, the reliance on dominant, colonial historical discourses seems to permit settler teachers to keep at a distance the need to cautiously engage with feelings of fear, disillusionment, and guilt when contending with the troubling implications of post-contact history. Through my research in the museum galleries and its implications for the ways in which dominant discourses about the pre-contact period are centered in curriculum, I can better understand that settler teachers need to be similarly cautious about situating themselves as perfect strangers when engaging with deep history curriculum. While settler teachers are not personally implicated in the histories of that time period, they are immediately implicated in the discourses through which they teach it. For the pre-contact period, what is at stake is not so much the troubling relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians, but rather the troubling history of how Western scholars, and by extension settler teachers, have implemented colonial, Western ways of knowing about the more distant past in order to weaponize historical discourses to perpetuate the colonial experiment. While learning about deep history from Indigenous educators can disrupt colonial narratives of the fantasies of objectivity and supremacy of the historical-chronological, cultural-evolutionary, and salvage paradigm frameworks, learning about, and teaching, deep history that relies solely on Western ways of knowing risks facilitating settler teachers' moves to innocence. Additionally, as Dion demonstrates, it risks permitting settler teachers' moving to protect "...themselves from having to recognise their own attachment to and implication in knowledge..." (2007, p. 331). Concerning the differences in the ways that Indigenous and Western experts narrate

Indigenous histories, especially the latter's use by settler teachers in school settings, constitutes a facet of Indigenous-Canadian relations in contemporary times, but particularly for settler teachers of deep history.

I am mindful of Tuck and Yang, Mawhinney, and other scholars who have also cautioned against settler teachers assuming an approach that seems to ask of Indigenous Peoples, "You are the experts, you should tell us what we should do..." (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 10). Tuck and Yang, and Mawhinney identify such an approach as a settler move to innocence. For example, in her 1998 Master's thesis, Mawhinney notes that the claim of non-experience constitutes a settler move to innocence.

Innocence by virtue of non experience is the premise for the related statement "tell me what to do, you are the experts here"...The seduction of the 'innocent' position is premised on a rather crass but pervasive understanding...of power as external and top down...in which racism is understood as a negative and abusive power located 'somewhere out there'. Claims of innocence by virtue of non experience are based upon this exterior view of power which function to distance and separate white people from the workings of racism. (Mawhinney, 1998, pp. 103-104)

As settler history teachers, we do not stand "somewhere out there" or outside the power structures of the education system. Rather, we work within it/are parts of it. Hence, assuming the position of "perfect stranger" and placing the job of restructuring/"decolonizing" the colonial curriculum on Indigenous Peoples constitutes a settler move to innocence. It is the difficult work of settler history teachers to identify, address, and challenge the colonial narratives and presuppositions in the way we teach, and to recognize our ongoing roles in our pedagogical practice.

Having settler history teachers confront and deconstruct the seemingly unimpeachable position that historical-chronological and cultural-evolutionary frameworks have in history education will continue to be a site of difficult learning and work. The difficulty

inherent in meeting this challenge on ongoing bases may cause some teachers to eschew the difficult path for the easier route of continuing to replicate colonial histories. To begin this work is not merely to commit to teaching alternate narratives. Rather, it is to commit to the process of continually questioning, revising and working through the difficulties in one's own interpretations of how to teach alternate narratives, and one's own location as an active agent in that process. Dion (2009) found that when settler teachers taught with Indigenous stories in classroom contexts, the teacher's pedagogical experience often led them to avoid engaging with the difficult content of the stories, which were designed to disrupt colonial narratives of Canadian-Indigenous relationships. Instead, the teachers often used the stories to reproduce existing ways of knowing (2009, p. 176). Teachers avoided the troubling ramifications of the stories in order to evade imagined difficulties with students' parents (p. 101) or by staging a facile empathy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (p. 99). Maintaining a curriculum status quo by not confronting the difficulties that teachers may have in disrupting their own long-held beliefs in the epistemological benefits of teaching according to the historical-chronological and cultural-evolutionary frameworks, however, will constitute another missed opportunity to begin to redress the colonial legacies of history education in Ontario.

Donald (2009a, 2012) notes the educational opportunities inherent within sites of difficult difference between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians through the perspective of hermeneutics. The tensions of this dynamic anticipate what I see as a site of tension between settler teachers' resistance to disrupting the colonial curriculum and my own efforts to engage disruptive learning through the museum galleries of my research. Donald (2012) reminds us that;

Hermeneutics is a form of radical thinking suspicious of prescribed solutions that seeks to engage with difficulty and ambiguity – ‘the fix we are in’ – by remaining right in the midst of tensionalities rather than searching to rise above or move beyond them (Caputo 1987, 3). It is this desire to remain amidst the messiness and difficulties of a situation or context that creates opportunities for new knowledge and understanding to arise... The true home of hermeneutics, then, is the space in between the familiar and the strange and in the interpretation of the experience or feeling that things were not as they were assumed to be (Carson 1986, 75). (pp. 545-547)

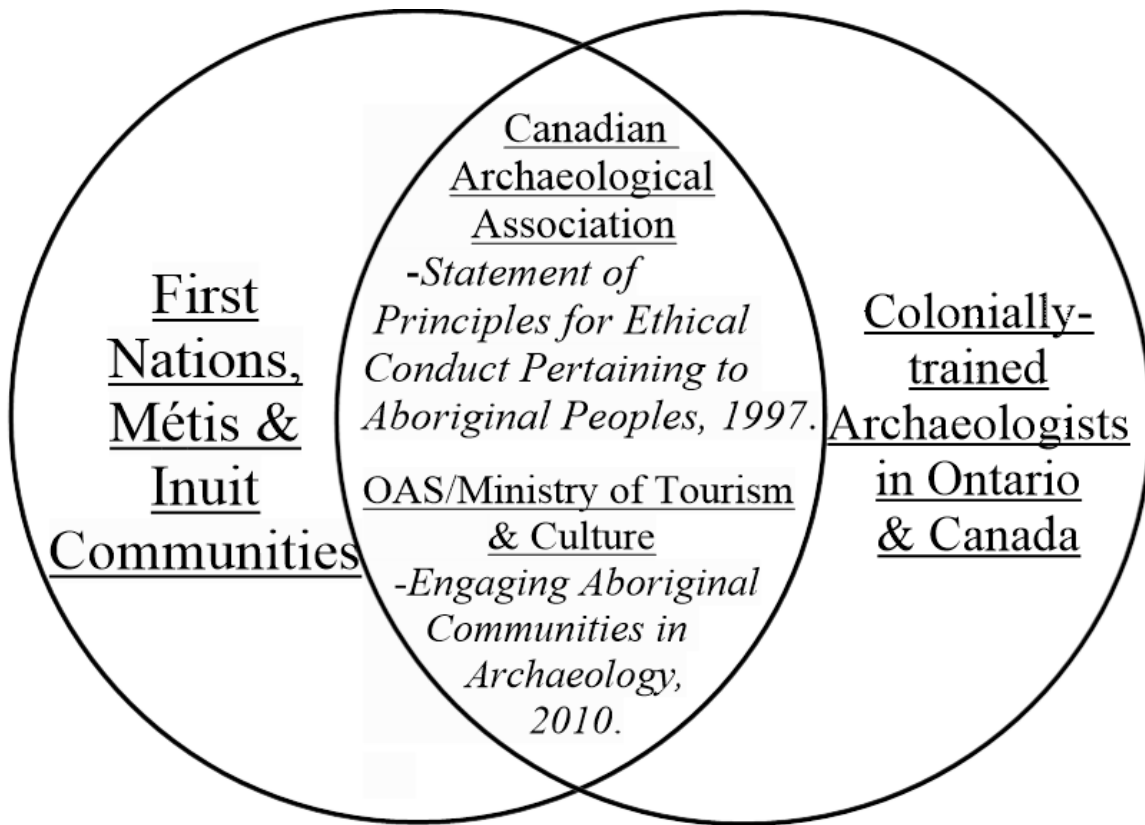
Having settler history teachers move away from long-reified approaches like the historical-chronological and cultural-evolutionary frameworks might constitute a “space in between the familiar and the strange” (Donald, 2012, p. 547). It is in making this difficult move in which settler teachers may find the challenging responsibility of interrogating their/our own biases, presuppositions, educational experiences, and teaching scaffolding, to begin to take steps towards remaining “amidst the messiness” in order to create “opportunities for new knowledge and understanding” (Donald, 2012, p. 545). Indigenous scholars like Dion and Donald situate those very difficulties as the learning opportunities through which colonial narratives of history may begin to be disrupted. After my research in the museums, it seems to me that settler history teachers resisting disrupting and reframing the historical-chronological, cultural-evolutionary and salvage paradigm under- and overtones of the colonial curriculum’s approaches to deep history constitute both a settler move to innocence, and an avoidance of the opportunity to work with students through difficult hi(stories) and realizations about the nature of the curriculum. It leads to teachers avoiding their responsibility to engage with Indigenous teachings across Donald’s “historic divides” (p. 535). Further, without reframing the way we teach Indigenous hi(stories), it negates our own learning opportunities as teachers to remain “right in the midst of tensionalities rather than searching to rise above or move



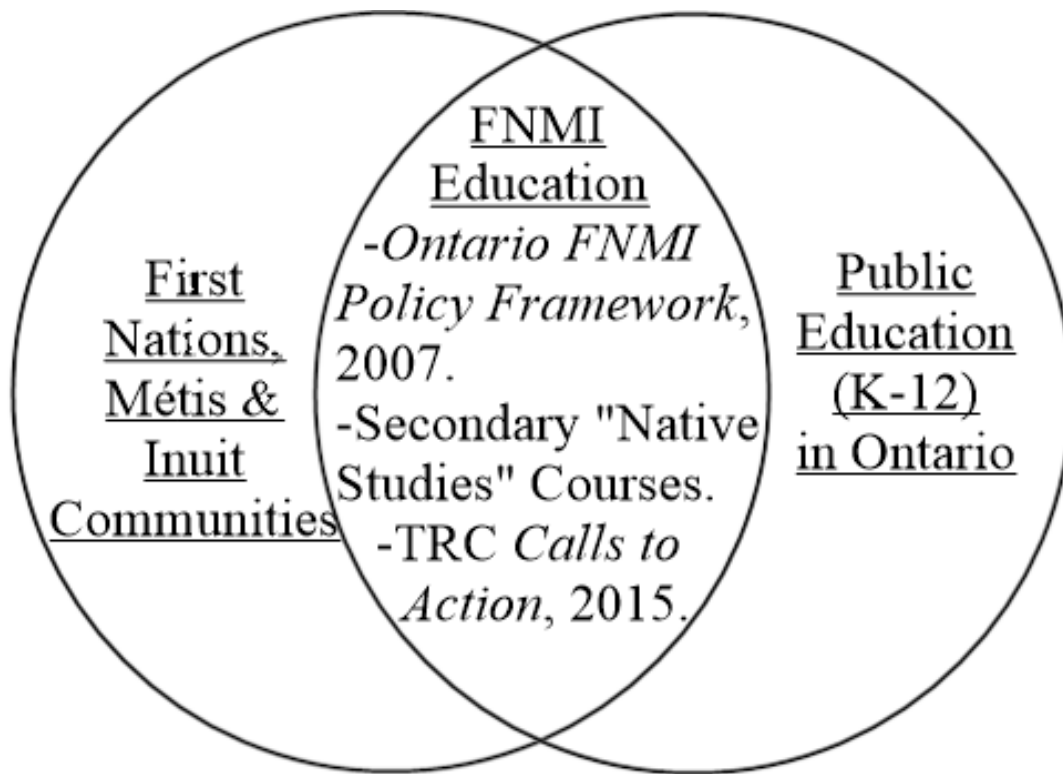
beyond them” (p. 545).

Bergmark et. al. found that teachers frequently enter the profession with altruistic motives, such as the desire to learn how to help others (2018, p. 276). Teacher candidates entering teacher training programs are hopefully optimistic about taking steps to rewrite their understanding and presuppositions about teaching practice, pedagogy, and ethics. Neither teacher candidates nor veteran teachers have recourse to narratives of innocence or ignorance about the colonial nature of Ontario’s history curriculum. Continuing to adhere to such narratives constitutes, in an education context, the attempt to situate the self as a “perfect stranger,” (Dion (2007, p. 330, 2009, p. 179) and similarly constitutes a settler move to innocence that “rescues settler futurity” (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 3). Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, speaking about residential schools and Reconciliation, noted that “Education is what got us into this mess — the use of education at least in terms of residential schools — but education is the key to reconciliation” (Watters, 2015). This statement represents a call to settler teachers to maintain the optimistic attitudes with which they began teaching, but to continue to orient those attitudes to questioning, challenging, and reframing their understandings of history education. It is this spirit through which teachers can act on our responsibilities to disrupt and reframe our reliance on colonial frameworks of Indigenous deep hi(stories). The call of this dissertation is for settler teachers to embrace their/our positions as perpetual learners, particularly where that learning implies working within the discomfort not only of confronting their/our own lack of knowledge of, and status as visitors to, the deep history curriculum, but more disturbingly, confronting their/our own implication in replicating the violence of education and in systems that continue to benefit them.

## Figures



*Figure 1.* Professional archaeological associations in Canada have been taking steps to work in closer partnership with First Nations communities than in the past. Unfortunately, however, the form of these partnerships is often confined to the consultation phase. Nonetheless, an ideal product of these partnerships, a co-constructed historical narrative, remains absent from Ontario history curriculum.



*Figure 2.* Ontario's Ministry of Education has taken steps to work more closely with First Nations communities and include authentic Indigenous curriculum in schools. However, full partnership with Indigenous communities in the construction of pre-contact period history and archaeology has yet to happen, and this segment of Indigenous history is woefully under-represented in Ontario's curriculum.

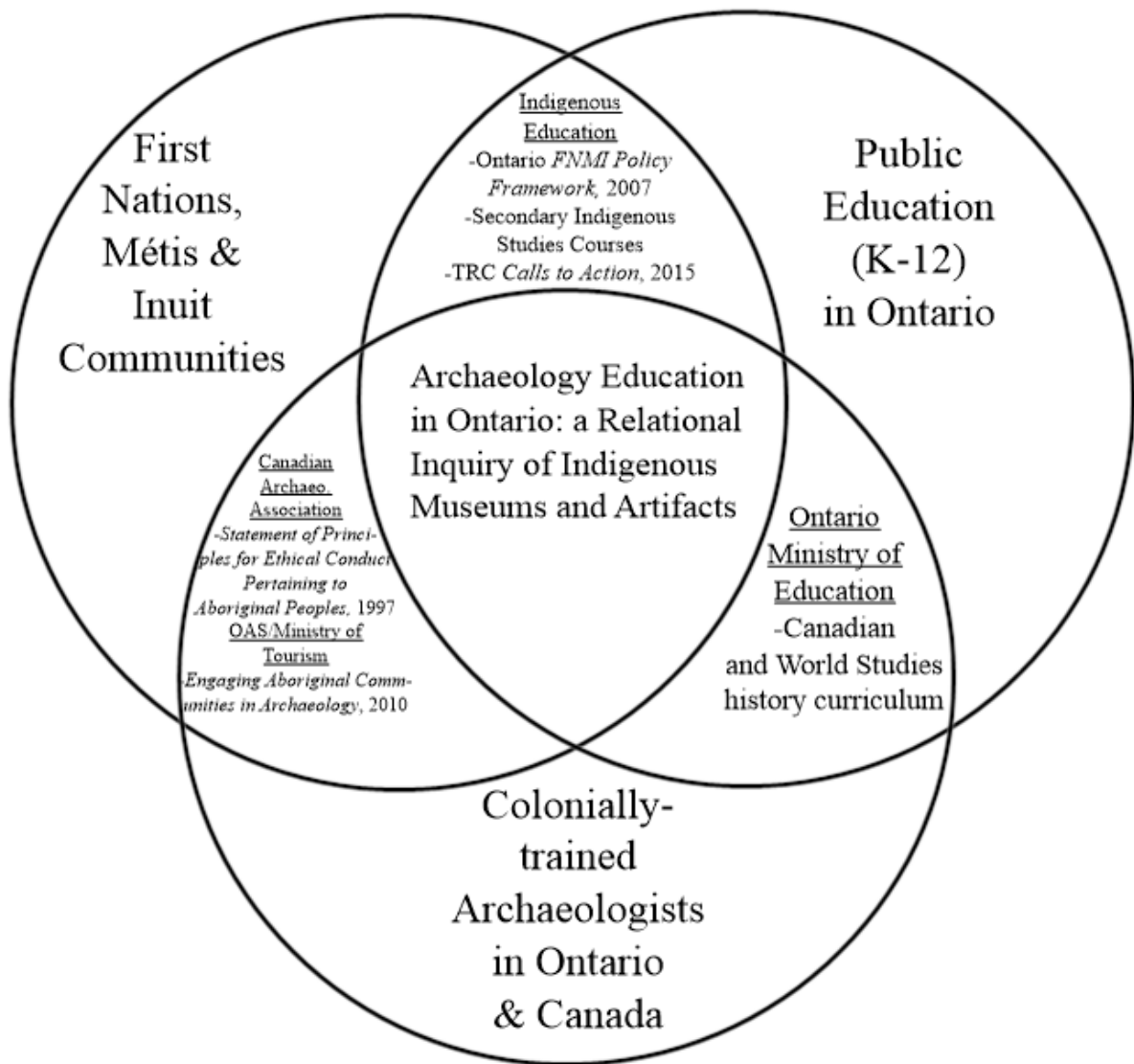


Figure 3. The author's dissertation, "Archaeology Education in Ontario: a Relational Inquiry of Indigenous Museums and Artifacts" will seek to define how Indigenous ways of knowing, *Indigenous archaeologies*, can be added to the archaeologist-generated colonial historical narrative of the pre-contact period in Ontario's classrooms.

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## **Appendix A**

- 1) How can Indigenous (Anishinaabe) curatorial practices teach me to understand how to address the gaps in current pre-contact history curriculum?
- 2) How might these curatorial practices inform classroom educators about how the pre-contact period history curriculum might be improved, so as to centre Indigenous ways of knowing?
- 3) How can these themes and approaches instruct teachers on how to decolonize the pre-contact history curriculum in Ontario schools?

## **Appendix B**

Ontario Curriculum courses for the secondary level are entirely structured on historical-chronological frameworks. I notice that the Grade 10 Canadian History since World War I course CHC2D is organized with the curriculum expectations divided into the following discrete groupings (In each course, there is a curriculum expectations group listed as “A” (first group in the documents) entitled, HISTORICAL INQUIRY AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT):

### **Grade 10**

CHC2D: Canadian History since World War I

B. CANADA, 1914–1929

C. CANADA, 1929–1945

D. CANADA, 1945–1982

E. CANADA, 1982 TO THE PRESENT (Ministry of Education 2018, pp. 112-125).

### **Grade 11**

Similarly, the curriculum expectations of the American History course CHA3U is organized with the curriculum expectations divided into the following discrete groupings:

CHA3U: American History

B. THE UNITED STATES, PRECONTACT TO 1791

C. THE UNITED STATES, 1791–1877

D. THE UNITED STATES, 1877–1945

E. THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1945 (pp. 304-314).

### **Grade 12**

CHI4U Canada: History, Identity, and Culture

B. CANADA, ORIGINS TO 1774

C. CANADA, 1774–1867

D. CANADA, 1867–1945

E. CANADA SINCE 1945

(pp. 375-385).

CHY4U: World History Since the Fifteenth Century

B. THE WORLD, 1450–1650

C. THE WORLD, 1650–1789

D. THE WORLD, 1789–1900

E. THE WORLD SINCE 1900

(pp. 395-404).